

THE INCARNATION OF PLANTING A CHURCH:
CHANGING THE PARADIGM

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ABSTRACT

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Mentoring and leadership development was used in the planting of Family Life African Methodist Episcopal Church, Hagerstown, MD (AMEC), a five-year missions church, using codified processes in the areas of administration, politics, finance, marketing, etc., while addressing congregational and community needs. With the analysis of collected data, the hypothesis concluded that a well-trained and structured mentoring program could be the most important factor of success when planting a church, with a strategic plan in place to bridge the knowledge and experience gaps within the church after the appointed missions pastor graduates from seminary and the AMEC Board of Examiners.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

This Doctor of Ministry journey has allowed me to labor, struggle, endure sickness and family losses; but also gain support, spiritual encouragement and enlightenment. In the culmination of this journey I now understand what it means to labor in the name of Jesus the Christ. First and foremost, I acknowledge God; without Him I know that I would never have started let alone completed this journey without Him guiding my steps and His grace has been evident and sufficient throughout my time in this program. As He worked through my elders, peers, seminary course work, the church, family and mentors – God was my stabilizer in my good and bad times. He alone gets the honor and the glory.

Additional acknowledgements and blessings must be given to the Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr., *Beloved Community*, Doctor of Ministry cohort for their continuous support. Bishop Harry L. Seawright, you have been a tremendous pillar of support during my ministry as a missions pastor and mentor during this research project. Special thanks to Rev Dr. C. A Hunt and Dr. Lisa Hess for your support and believing in the work that I have put forward and ensuring that I finished strong and could be a catalyst for others to follow. You both have been more than role models but motivators who continually strive for excellence in ministry and higher achievement. Thank you for your leadership and support.

Much love and blessings to my children Kenneth, Gabriella, Kamani and Angelica, who watched me work tirelessly on many late hours on this project and made sure that I ate as well – love you! Christian, wherever you are or doing, be the best at it! I love you without reservation. A special shout-out to my brothers Michael and Ivan, words will never be enough, so for now I'll just say I love you and thank you for helping me in life; I love you guys. To the officers and members of Family Life Ministry African Methodist Episcopal Church, mentors, supporters and project facilitators – Thank you and God Bless!

Lastly, there are not enough words to express the love and gratitude that I have for my heart-felt role model, my wife the Rev Dr. Sakima Romero-Chandler. I love you to life for your tireless support, love and admiration, not just through this project but through our lives together. This woman of God, whose unwavering faith, support and belief in me led to the success of the completion of this project.

DEDICATION

To my parents, the late Joseph Charles Chandler, Sr., and Altha Marie Steen-Chandler, thank you for passing on your belief that there are greater things in life that are out of my control. That everything happens for a reason, in and out of season and in the end, we still may never know why. That there are moments of profound greatness we experience that provide comfort and a sense of self that we can't explain.

Thank you for being strict with your rules so that I did not go down the wrong path. Thank you for standing firm when I wanted to go somewhere or do something that, in hindsight, could have introduced me to things that would have jeopardize my future or my life. Finally, thank you for telling me that whatever I want to do or be, just be the best at it. Thank you for reminding me at an early age that I would have an impact on humanity in some significant way. Thank you for blessing and loving me forever and always; until we are reunited again, know that I love and miss you every day...

Your Loving Son

Joe

ABBREVIATIONS

AMEC	African Methodist Episcopal Church
BOE	Board of Examiners
DNA	Deoxyribonucleic Acid
FLAME	Family Life African Methodist Episcopal
GPA	Grade Point Average
HBCUs	Historically Black Colleges and Universities
LDF	Legal Defense Fund
LGBTQI	Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, Queer or Questioning, and Intersex
MAJ	Major
MLK	Martin Luther King, Jr.
NAMB	North American Mission Board
SCLS	Southern Christian Leadership Conference
SNCC	Nonviolent Coordinating Committee
U.S.A.	United States Army
U.S.	United States
WRAP	Waste and Resources Action Programme
WCPS	Washington County Public School

INTRODUCTION

This project, *The Incarnation of Planting a Church: Changing the Paradigm*, takes into consideration the culmination of teachings from Scriptures, reflections of Black history and the leadership development process for mission pastors (hereafter referred to as pastor(s)) within the African Methodist Episcopal Church (AMEC) who are planting a new work. Secondly, there must be a performance evaluation in which the mentor and pastor can produce a post evaluation of the program and conduct a pastor's performance in the areas of administration, politics, marketing and address congregational and community needs. Thirdly, this project introduces a timeline, processes relative to church planting and recommendations pastors will need to efficiently and effectively implement after leaving seminary and the AMEC Board of Examiners (BOE).

Chapter one will briefly touch on the history of Family Life Ministry African American Episcopal (FLAME) Church and also identify the need for a strategy in planting a new work and bridging what is perceived to be a gap in leadership development. The inclusion of a standardized mentor leadership program with a continuous observation in the mission plant process would further improve this outcome along with the incorporation of surveys (See Appendix A, B and C); as well as mentor and pastor evaluations which would provide statistical data to support this project and offer insight into successful church planting. The methodology to be used in this project will be qualitative in nature.

Chapter two will examine mentoring processes for missions' church pastor in the AMEC by exploring Scriptural relationship which will include the relationship of Elijah and Elisha in the book of Kings. The story of Elijah and Elisha is an illustration of mentorship which allows the reader to visualize the importance of the mentoring relationship.

Chapter three will allow the reader to understand that all leaders possess identifiable characteristics that set them apart from their peers because they have been forged in a continuous developmental process shaped outside of their comfort zone and conforming frame of understanding.

Chapter four is built upon Martin Luther King, Jr.'s *Beloved Community* and the mentoring processes needed by pastors planting a new work and provisioning them with the essential elements of leadership and knowledge using Elijah and Elisha as an example in the book of Kings. Leadership development through mentoring is the focus of this project; being cognizant that without the intentional development of leaders through mentoring, this particular ministry could lose its effectiveness.

Chapter five provides a mentoring process and vision for persons who desire to become mission pastors by codifying processes which would serve as a guide in the areas of administration, political affluence/influence, finance, marketing; and other functionalities that can assist a pastor in addressing congregational and community needs.

Chapter six reviews conducted with senior clergy members who provided leadership fundamentals they believed every missions' pastor will need in the first three to five years to efficiently and effectively use after graduating from seminary and the AMEC Board of Examiners (BOE). Prayerfully, this program will cultivate emerging

pastoral leaders who will successfully plant churches and develop leaders to become a catalyst for a continuum of effective servants in the body of Christ. Developing leaders and disciples brought together for fellowship, ministry and the proclamation of the glory of God is the goal of the Great Commission as written in the book of Matthew.

Then Jesus came to them and said, all authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me. Therefore, go and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, and teaching them to obey everything I have commanded you. And surely, I am with you always, to the very end of the age.¹

Should the ministerial learning institution remain in its current concepts and contexts (without mentoring), many pastors may be fearful of stepping out due to a lack of knowledge, preparation and experiences. A new methodology of openness, stimulation and discussion regardless of topic should allow for the pastor and mentor to engage in a stimulated bilateral learning environment; along with the formulation of black leadership development, which must not be content with the retention of the word, but the passing on of black theological values, discipleship, life-lessons and tradition onto the next generation of leaders.

¹ Matthew 28:16-20, New Revised Standard Version (NRSV). Unless otherwise noted, all scripture references in this document are from NRSV.

CHAPTER ONE

MINISTRY FOCUS

Introduction

This project is designed to assist in the fundamental growth and mentoring of missions' pastors and provide the essential elements and tools for a successful ministry through a redesigned, re-engineered and codified mentoring process. Mentoring is a process in which an experienced individual helps another person develop his or her goals and life-skills through a series of short or long-term one-on-one conversations, in addition to other learning activities.

FLAME was planted in the Spring of 2012 in Hagerstown, Maryland, in Washington County. FLAME is a ministry that teaches and preaches the Word of God in such a manner that it transforms the believer and incites a conversation from the non-believer. Our goal is to encourage the broken and disenfranchised by helping them find the message of love and hope in Jesus Christ. We believe that God's love that is illuminated in each member who will minister the Word in a manner that will provide guidance in identifying their gifted purpose. As a result, we will have individuals who are healed, obedient, prosperous, and empowered by the Holy Spirit. Our ultimate goal is to spiritually support the family.

During this project, I have benefitted from mentors who shared their wisdom and life experiences. This has helped me to evolve my thinking processes, develop new relationships and broaden my life-skills beyond family and community. The following are the five core values I acquired from the mentors who helped and continue to help in my continuous development:

1. To be empowered to make positive choices for myself and others. As I mentor others, I ask them to consider the positive and negative consequences of their decisions and guide them in the decision making process.
2. To take ownership of my ongoing learning processes. As such, learning comes from doing through trials and errors, not lectures. I was and still advised to seek out challenging tasks which will push me to develop new and hopefully better life skills, but also encourage others to do so as well.
3. To develop life skills by setting attainable goals, having the courage to face and overcome challenges, learn techniques to manage complex thoughts and emotions, and simultaneously providing encouragement.
4. To develop core values and in some cases refine my moral and ethical positions of those same core values through a non-conforming lens.
5. To strengthen interpersonal skills and peer relationships. My mentors also encouraged me to appreciate diversity and show respect to myself and all others.

FLAME encountered numerous hurdles and struggles. This included finding a suitable location, equipment, furniture, and steady funding. On numerous occasions, FLAME was gifted items in and around the community and from various churches including a piano, key board, communion plates and most of a pulpit that was donated by Reverend Anthony Young, then pastor of Dickerson Memorial AMEC.

There is an immediate need to train and mentor pastors desirous of planting a new church after graduating from the AME Church BOE and seminary. Mentoring will ensure a successful transition, thereby addressing ministerial weariness as referenced in the book

of Galatians, “Let us not become weary in doing good, for at the proper time we will reap a harvest if we do not give up.” (Gal 6:9). The responsibilities of a pastor in a new work requires more than classroom instruction in leadership and managerial principles to maintain balance within the home, community and the church. The pastor must be mentored and encouraged to develop a balance between humility, arrogance and that of an unwavering leader not intimidated or threatened by making a Godly decision. The task of being a pastor is a charge to do a good work in the name of God for the people of God.

What methodology must the church use in the twenty-first century to prepare missions’ pastors for their appointments? How will the church go about providing valuable feedback during this process? Training and mentoring is the key for the development and success of a leader. Not training for the sake of training; but training under the council of a team of mentors and advisors for three to five years. Brandon Porter writes in the book, *Filling God’s House*: “leadership development for yourself and for those around you is very important to the growth and continued strength of your church.”¹ A symbiotic relationship is developed between those being mentored as well as the mentor; however, if the mentor cannot or is unwilling to stimulate essential growth and development, the mentoring cycle may become stagnated proving to be detrimental to the mentoring process of the pastor. History captures the essence of quality leaders (Martin Luther King, Jr., Maya Wiley, Barrack Obama) with integrity and what it takes to extract the leadership qualities in others. Quality leaders set the foundation of what an individual can do and the boundless limits to which they can perform.

1. Brandon B. Porter, *Filling God’s House: Practical Church Growth Principals for the 21st Century* (Memphis, TN: GTC Productions, 2012), 39.

During the mentoring selection and appointment process, mentors themselves must also be evaluated and possess a high degree of competence, confidence, character, commitment, integrity and wisdom; ultimately becoming a template for the growth and reengineering of the new church. David Hansen argues, “Pastoral work has fundamentally changed, today it’s harder, more complex, and more intense than it was in generations past. The church needs to be reengineered to once again be an institutional force; pastors must look to new paradigms for their calling and see their role in fresh ways.”² The leadership and followership development of the pastor is paramount to the success of church planting; in addition to community interaction and spiritual growth. Jermaine N. Johnson, a successful church planter and the senior pastor and founder of Word of Life Christian Community Church in Randallstown, Maryland, writes, “the redemptive model encourages a team leadership approach directed and supervised alongside the pastor.”³ This model of church planting is rooted in the work and mentoring of Jesus. His strategy was rooted in His ability to build in undesirable and un-ministered areas, creating communities in new places through a network of new work.

Johnson’s vision embraces the importance of new leaders being mentored in planting a church and understanding the communities in which the new work is to be performed particularly from a black theological perspective. James H. Cone postulates that, “the black experience prevents us from turning the gospel into the theoretical catch

2. David Hansen and D. L. Goetz, *The Power of Loving your Church: Leading through Acceptance and Grace*, Vol. 1 of The Pastor’s Soul Series (Minneapolis, MN: Bethany House, 1998), 15.

3. Jermaine N. Johnson, *The New Wine Experience: A Leadership Model for Church Planting in the African American Context* (Charlotte, NC: CB Publishing & Design, 2014), 77.

phrases and makes us realize that it must be clothed in black flesh.”⁴ The twenty first century black church needs to consider returning to the roots of the black gospel and re-examine the teachings, mentorship and the theology of preparing pastors for the network of new-work in the black experience which is clothed in the blackness of articulating the preponderance of the black Christian experience. Cone further concludes, “Black theology is a product of that experience, it must talk about God in the light of it. The purpose of Black theology is to make sense of the black experience.”⁵ The black experience is not about staying in one’s space or place; conversely it is about being undefined or determined by those forces outside of the black Christian experience.

Jesus was crucified for not staying in His place. There is a greater need today to prepare radical preachers to radically build and educate the church body within the commitment of ensuring the survival and development of the black church through non-conformity. The trailblazers in human, academic, scientific, and religious freedom have always been nonconformists in the causes that concerns the progression of the oppressed. Nonconformity is difficult counsel to follow in a generation who consciously and unconsciously condition our disposition and feet to move to the rhythm of the status quo, taking the off-ramp to the path of least resistance and bid us never to fight for an unpopular cause and resist the spiritual gathering of two or more in His name. Intellectual discipline persuades humanity to embrace the need to conform. However, some philosophical sociologists suggest that morality is merely a group consensus and that the old ways are the right ways.

4. James H. Cone, *A Black Theology of Liberation* (Maryknoll, NY: Orbis Books, 2013), 25.

5. Cone, *A Black Theology of Liberation*, 25-26.

Some believe that mental and emotional adjustment is the reward of thinking and acting like those in a position of influence to receive their privileged acceptance.

Individual success, recognition, and conformity are the bywords of the world craving the anesthetizing security of being identified with the majority coupled with instantaneous gratification or punishment; this is not leadership, rather a dictatorship.

Despite this prevailing tendency to conform, Christian leaders specifically black leaders have a historical mandate to be nonconformists. The Apostle Paul, who knew the inner realities of the Christian faith, counseled, “Be not conformed to this world: but be ye transformed by the renewing of your mind” (Rom 12:2). African Americans come from an ancestry of royalty and honor, who were called to be a people of conviction not conformity; of moral nobility, not social respectability. There is a DNA within the African American community to live differently in accordance with a higher Spiritual authority. Every person is a citizen of two worlds: the world of time and the world of eternity. Partially in the world; and yet not of the world. To the Philippian Christians, Paul wrote, “We are a colony of Heaven” (Phil 3:20-21). The Christians of that time understood what it meant to live in the city of Philippi (a Roman colony) and yet not be a Roman. When Rome ‘Romanized’ a province, she established a small colony of insiders who lived by Roman laws and customs and held fast to their Roman allegiance. This powerful, creative minority spread the gospel of Roman culture. Although not a perfect analogy – the Roman settlers lived within a sphere of injustice and exploitation of Roman colonialism. As leaders of the church, surrender and assimilation into worldly values and concepts contrary to God’s authority, is not an option knowing that at the heart of the

universe is a higher spiritual reality; God and His kingdom of love, to which we must acquiesce.

This command not to conform comes not only from Paul, but also from Jesus, (inclusive of other nonconformist), whose ethical nonconformity still challenges the conscience of the privileged sector of humanity in the twenty first century which judges itself by wealth and abundance, inhumane border enforcement and the perceived impressiveness of status. Jesus reminds us, “And He said to them, take care! Be on your guard against all kinds of greed; for one’s life does not consist in the abundance of possessions” (Lk 12:15). The demands of living differently today has cultivated a harvest of collectivism or group priority over the individuals in the group. A clear indication of the collectivism movement is reflected in the 2018 midterm elections in which the survival of the GOP party was more relevant than health-care; coupled with the deliberate disenfranchisement by the administration of low income recipients, Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, Queer or Questioning, and Intersex (LGBTQI), minorities, climate-change, immigrants migrating into the United States, etc.

The privileged society is not the makers of history, but rather history is made through those that have been oppressed and directly transformed history. Henry Wadsworth Longfellow wrote, “in this world a man must either be an anvil or hammer.”⁶ This is a reminder that as clergy and participants in the development of pastors, the Holy Spirit is the fire. Leadership is the hammer used to shape leaders upon the anvil of life

6. Henry Wadsworth Longfellow Quotes. BrainyQuote.com, Xplore Inc, 2018.
https://www.brainyquote.com/quotes/henry_wadsworth_longfello_151334, accessed May 28, 2018.

which calls and shapes one to be the moral guardians and compasses of and for the oppressed community.

The church has used Scripture at times, in the name of God, to ill-advisedly preserve that which is bias, immoral and at times unethical: Jim Crow and slavery – “Slaves, obey your earthly masters with respect and fear, and with sincerity of heart, just as you would obey Christ” (Eph 6:5). White-supremacy groups, – “Let everyone be subject to the governing authorities, there is no authority except that which God has established. The authorities that exist have been established by God. Consequently, whoever rebels against the authority is rebelling against what God has instituted, and those who do so will bring judgment on themselves” (Rom 13:1-2). Sexism – “Women should remain silent in the churches. They are not allowed to speak, but must be in submission, as the law says” (1Cor 14:34).

Called to combat social evils, many times the voice of the church has been silent behind the pulpit and stained-glass windows as pastors are called to lead and summon those to rise above the narrow confines of race and classism. Some preachers have been tempted by the enticing embrace of conformity and have passed it onto the next generation without care or consideration of the outcome. Seduced by the success symbols of the world, the church’s achievements have been measured by the size of the congregation, home, car, clothes or Learjet. Some pastors have become entertainers to please the whims and caprices of the people.

The church leadership must recapture the Black Theological gospel of the early black Christians who were nonconformists and refused to shape their witness according to the sinful and enticing patterns of the world. Our forefathers and mothers sacrificed

freedom, fortune, and life on behalf of a cause they knew to be true and Godly.

Nonconformity pastoral training is creative when it is mentored by another non-conforming leader transformed by Christ.

In these days of confusion within the church, there is a dire need for men and women who will courageously echo the words of John Bunyan who said to his jailer when having spent twelve years in jail and promised freedom if he would agree to stop preaching, “I have determined, the Almighty God, being my help and shield, yet to suffer, if frail life might continue so long, even till the moss shall grow on mine eyebrows, rather than thus to violate my faith and principles.”⁷ The church body cannot afford to continue to march to the rhythm of political conformity and false respectability. There must be a collective will to march to the music of time-tested spiritual truth.

More than ever before, the church is challenged by the words of yesterday, “Be not conformed to this world: but be yet transformed by the renewing of your mind” (Rom 12:2). Where is the non-conformist? Today, we live in a country where you can be pro-death penalty, pro-unrestricted gun rights, pro-repeal of health care, pro-stand your ground, pro-police murder and harassment of people of color; and yet America calls itself pro-life. Where is the nonconformist?

7. John Bunyan, *Works of John Bunyan: Experimental, Doctrinal, and Practical* (classic Reprint) (S.l.: Forgotten Books, 2016), 594.

Project Calendar

This project calendar codifies the mile-markers and the planting and growth of Family Life African Methodist Episcopal (FLAME) church and The Life Center International Church, a non-denominational church both of which are located in Washington County, MD. In meeting with the late Reverend Dr. Goodwin Douglas, Presiding Elder of the Capital District concerning the planting of churches, he routinely high-lighted the need to incorporate information gleaned from demographic studies of the community as a step toward obtaining information about the racial, gender, economic and age of the area in which the church is to be planted. Bishop Harry L. Seawright, author of, *More than Bricks and Mortar, Building a Church Without Losing Your Mind*, writes, “This study will provide valuable information for planning programs to serve the community. Such studies also will indicate the rate of growth for the community or area, as well as the potential growth for the congregation and will enable the church to plan for the future.”¹

The anticipated timeline for this project can be designed in approximately six weeks or less; however, the actual execution is set with a solid twelve-month action plan that will be developed prior to planting and is subject to routine modifications as the process matures. This project is only successful through conducting a continuous improvement plan, strategic problem-solving and brainstorming.

This project (approved by the sixty-third annual Washington Conference) is designed to be in collaboration with the pastor, presiding elder, presiding prelate, church

1. Harry L. Seawright, *More than bricks and mortar: Building a church without losing your mind*. (Washington: HLS Consulting, Inc., 1996), 10.

officers, members, local churches and community leaders. As such, this ensures that the quality and planned objectives are used for the growth of the church and all who become involved in the process. After the home going of the Elder, the pastor and associate pastor revised and implemented each step of the developmental schedule, after having to be relocated three times, feeding the hungry, providing clothing and free school supplies to more than 1500 members of the community. This was accomplished with the support of the Washington County Community leaders, first responders, school board and supermarket chains.

As a missions' pastor, I knew that I possessed the abilities and qualities to lead a missions church; however, mentoring and funding was desperately needed. While it is too early to evaluate the validity of a pastor's readiness using this tool to lead a church; what is clear from the subject surveys is that they see themselves as leaders desirous of being mentored and receiving additional support to plant and lead a church. There is a need for further examination to assess the actual benefits of this developmental calendar on a long-term basis.

Developmental Schedule

Eleven - Twelve Months Out:

- Pray
- Ensure Presiding Elder and Bishop's Support
- Acquire current demographics of target community
- Select a church name and proposed service time

- Establish a relationship with other mission churches
- Consider hiring a church planter
- Establish fundraising relationships with sister churches/individuals
- Enlist prayer partners for project
- Open savings and checking accounts for church
- Obtain Employer Identification Number (EIN) from IRS
- Apply for a 501(c) 3
- Establish P.O. Box
- Begin developing mission/vision statement and core values (AME Discipline)
- Look for potential meeting places (Lease options for two- years)
- Meet with mentor(s) concerning strategies
- Design banners, website, fliers and business cards
- Research church insurance policies
- Conduct monthly progress review (this step will continue through the entire planting process)
- Begin church incorporation process
- Formulate a core group from which to grow your congregation (this step will continue through the entire planting process)
- Attend different churches to determine the “climate” of the churches in the community
- Meet with local clergy and community leaders to learn about the needs of the community
- Draft a profile of the target community

- Form a budget for the plant: [www: budgeting page/tool](#)
- Reach out to individuals and partner churches for financial support
- Begin logo design for new church
- Shop potential web design and marketing firms to help with launch
- Choose a finance committee for the new church (consider bonding)
- Continue enlisting prayer partners
- Continue working on mission/vision and values statements
- Conduct monthly progress review
- Continue looking for potential staff members
- Pray

Seven-Ten Months Out:

- Pray
- Consider hiring a church planter
- Enlist prayer partners for project
- Update demographics of target community
- Continue modifying mission/vision statement and core values
- Continue looking for potential meeting places
- Continue looking for potential staff members
- Continue to build fundraising relationships with individual partners
- Continue to build relationships with potential partner churches
- Complete incorporation process

- Continue to develop your core group
- Hold first meeting with core group (meet with group once per month until three months prior to launch, meetings should become more frequent)
- Accept resumes from potential staff members for key areas of ministry
- Complete logo design
- Have at least ten to fifteen prayer partners enlisted
- Identify and contact financial partners
- Complete vision statement and core values
- Brainstorm outreach events with core group
- Narrow Sunday morning meeting places down to three options and rank them in order of preference
- Place announcements about your new church in area papers and social media
- Host a focus group within the community to ask them questions that will help you design your ministry
- Hold a prayer walk in the targeted community
- Consider holding monthly prayer walks leading up to launch
- Conduct monthly progress review
- Pray

Five-Seven Months Out:

- Pray
- Identify potential staff members and begin interview process

- Commit to a meeting place for Sunday mornings
- Purchase liability/property insurance for church
- Choose a date for launch
- Finalize group you will be working with for marketing
- Send list of prayer needs to prayer partner team
- Host focus groups of unchurched, continue the focus of the new church
- Schedule a monthly outreach event for the new church in the community
- Continue seeking financial support from individuals
- Continue meeting with and recruiting people to core group
- Begin hiring staff (if financially possible)
- Continue to look for potential ministry center space
- Hold first and second outreach event in new church's community
- Brainstorm moving unchurched people into a relationship with Jesus
- Spread the word about your church start within the community
- Attend other new church works with the core team for exposure to new church work and meet with other new church planters to share ideas
- Continue web design process for church
- Look for potential ministry center space
- Continue web design process for church
- Continue to make proposals to partner churches
- Conduct monthly progress review
- Pray

Three-Four Months Out:

- Pray
- Begin design of postcards and business cards
- Place signage and printed materials in and around the community
- Connect with other churches to assist in collecting physical materials needed for launch and during the first thirteen weeks of life
- Continue recruitment efforts
- Continue web design process
- Complete direct mail and website design
- Finalize vendors to utilize for signage, printing, etc.
- Continue meeting with and recruiting people to core group
- Finish hiring staff (if able)
- Hold several outreach events in the community
- Conduct second and third preview service
- Interview musicians to participate in your worship team
- Design and send program shell to printer (or print yourself to save \$\$\$)
- Begin acquiring needed equipment through various means
- Select curriculum for children's ministry
- Determine method for tracking and following up with newcomers
- Consider ordering advertisement items (mugs, water bottles, etc.)
- Collect materials donated from partner churches
- Always send thank you letters especially to your visitors

- Continue to make proposals to partner churches
- Conduct monthly progress review
- Pray

One Month Out:

- Pray
- Finish printing materials needed for launch (program shells, etc.)
- Complete and put up sign(s) for church
- Hold two more practice services in the worship venue
- Finish purchasing all necessary equipment
- Hold final outreach event prior to launch
- Send direct marketing material to area households
- Send press release to relevant media about the new church opening
- Advertise in local newspaper
- Contact your plant group, inform them of the upcoming birth of the church
- Pray

Week Six Developmental Schedule

Two Weeks Prior to Launch:

- Pray
- Hold one outreach and fellowship event per month (this keeps the focus outward and help bring people into the new church)
- Follow up with newcomers each week
- Continually communicate core values and vision
- Begin the process of discipleship (in the second month of birth)
- Hold one big event for children on Sunday morning
- Encourage and equip your attenders to become inviters
- Pray

During the 63rd Session Washington Annual Conference it was unanimously approved that FLAME would be launched and planted in Hagerstown, MD. With the addition of FLAME to the AMEC family in Hagerstown, MD, there are now two AMECs in the Washington County Area.

Historical Movement

The historical movement of the 1960s was a wake-up call in the history of America. African Americans protested, fought, bled, died and finally achieved some level of equality promised to all men as written in the Declaration of Independence. The true energy behind FLAME's existence is based upon Martin Luther King, Jr.'s *Beloved*

Community with an impetus on the urgency of now. The birth of the Civil Rights movement which shook and continues to rock the core of this nation began in the church, and the effects of that movement reverberates today. The protest and the fight for equality is still underway which was witnessed in Charlottesville, VA, on August 2017, resulting in the death of one woman and the injury of numerous others.

Political infighting has set the stage for the removal of numerous Confederate markers after years of violent and non-violent protest, court demands, and denials and in each instance the church was there. Church members, specifically those of color, have been frequently attacked, in other cases killed, and is sadly becoming all too common place in the twenty first century. This is no longer just a black issue but an issue that affects all walks of life, all houses of worship, Christian, Mosque and Synagogues are regularly targeted by hate groups. What happen to the clarion voice, the strength and respect of the church in our communities? Why are churches continuously struggling to be better funded, better protected and to do more with less? Many churches today are in an economic downfall for a multitude of reasons, in that, a course correction must be made for the survival, mission and vision of every church.

The AMEC Discipline, mission, vision and by-laws clarifies the purpose and intent of the church in providing direction for all activities and functions which support the teaching and preaching the Word of God while building on Martin Luther King, Jr's *Beloved Community*; Yet, mentoring remains an underutilized tool.

Geographic's

As of this writing, FLAME was located in the Northeast section of Hagerstown, MD, Washington County, Maryland. The population of Hagerstown recorded during the 2010 census was, “39,662, and the population of the Hagerstown-Martinsburg Metropolitan Area (extending into West Virginia) was 269,140. Hagerstown ranks as Maryland's sixth largest incorporated city.”¹ Hagerstown is south of the Mason–Dixon line and north of the Potomac River and between the Blue Ridge and Allegheny Mountains in a part of the Great Appalachian Valley known regionally as Cumberland Valley and locally as Hagerstown Valley. The community also lies within close proximity of Pennsylvania, West Virginia, and Virginia. The city of Hagerstown is approximately seventy miles northwest of Washington, D.C.; seventy-two miles west-northwest of Baltimore, Maryland; and seventy-four miles southwest of Harrisburg, Pennsylvania.

Hagerstown has a distinct topography formed by stone ridges running from northeast to southwest through the center of town. Geography accordingly bounds its neighborhoods. Many of the older buildings and churches were built from this stone, which whitens in weathering conditions and the laminate become distinctly visible, giving it a unique appearance. Several of Hagerstown’s churches are constructed of Stonehenge limestone and its value and beauty as building rock may be seen particularly in St. John’s Episcopal Church on West Antietam Street and the Presbyterian Church at

1. "Hagerstown, Maryland." Hagerstown, Maryland (MD 21740) profile: *population, maps, real estate, averages, homes, statistics, relocation, travel, jobs, hospitals, schools, crime, moving, houses, news, sex offenders*. Accessed November 26, 2017. <http://www.city-data.com/city/Hagerstown-Maryland.html>.

the corner of Washington and Prospect Streets is described as, “Brick and concrete eventually displaced this native stone in the construction process.”²

Demographics

The demographics of Washington County, MD, according to the 2015-2017 Maryland census is the, “11th largest county in Maryland by population and contains more than fifty census locations. The largest communities in Washington County, MD by population are Hagerstown, MD., with a median household income between \$56,228 and \$62,453.”³

Poverty by Race and Ethnicity

The Washington County Census Bureau uses a set of monetary income thresholds that vary by family size and composition to determine who is in poverty. If a family’s total income is less than the family’s threshold, that family and every individual in it is considered to be in poverty. The numbers represent a staggering ratio of more whites than any other minority falling below the poverty line as recorded by the census bureau as, “(a) White – 5,948 ± 575, (b) Black or African American, 3,056 ± 522, (c) Two or

2 Ray Smith Bass, *State of Maryland Geological Survey, Cambrian and Ordovician Deposits of Maryland* (1919) at 99.

3. "Washington County, MD." Data USA. Accessed November 26, 2017. <https://datausa.io/profile/geo/washington-county-md/>.

more races, and $1,077 \pm 340$.”⁴ The most common job groups in Washington County, MD, are Management, Business, Science & Arts, Sales, Education and Service.

Significant Events (2013-present)

The officers and members of FLAME provided an additional Sunday afternoon worship service (from 2015-16) at the Broadmore Senior Living Facility. In addition, the officers conducted weekly spiritual and Bible study visits to the residents and staff. Under the leadership of the associate pastor, FLAME’s Women’s Ministry fellowship created “Vashti’s Vessels”, a women’s closet and program, open 365-days a year. As such, we provide uplifting spiritual support and guidance through the study of the Word and fellowship. FLAME and The Life Center International Church continues to provide the compassion of Christ and spiritual and physical support to those who are sick, home bound and bereaved. The ministry also extends love and support through prayers, visitations, telephone calls and written correspondence (cards, letters, etc.) on a continuous basis.

4. "Hagerstown, MD." Data USA. Accessed November 26, 2017.
<https://datausa.io/profile/geo/hagerstown-md/>.

Scholarships

The creation of the Deborah Simmons Scholarship in 2016 is awarded annually to a student who has lost a parent and continues to strive in the furtherance of his/her education. The student must submit a grammatically correct three-page letter detailing their educational goals, community activities and specific need for the scholarship and finally meet with a scholarship selection committee.

They must have a signed letter of intent from a prospective college. The initial 2016 scholarship amount was \$500.00 and increases by fifty dollars per annum and will be awarded to a student attending a college or university with a Grade Point Average (GPA) of 2.7 or greater.

Learning Parties

The initiation/development of Learning Parties are interactive, hands-on, parent/child parties that promote young children's development of school readiness skills. Based on the belief that parents are their child's first teacher, Learning Parties teach parents how to make everyday moments learning moments through playing, singing, talking, reading, and engaging in fun activities in six key Domains of Learning: Language & Literacy, Math, Science, Social & Emotional Development, Physical Development, and The Arts.

Each series consists of four ninety-minute Learning Parties. The associate pastor serves as the Parent Skill Development Lead Trainer and demonstrates a variety of techniques and strategies for improving the skills and abilities of the children. Each

session focuses on a specific concept and helps parents to build a resource library in their home.

Men's Retreat

FLAME's Annual Men and Young Men's Retreat is an intensive, sustained intervention approach to empowering adult men and young men (of all walks of life) with the knowledge, skills and abilities to succeed in a stressful society. The retreat equips men with the necessary tools to effect positive change in their lives, families and communities. During the retreat, men learn through empowerment, not fear, through programs that teach teamwork, leadership, values, responsibilities and practical life skills. The program also addresses domestic violence, finance, relationships building, education, law enforcement interaction, etc.

Women's Retreat

The women, young adult women and church community participate annually in the retreat which is coordinated and implemented by FLAME's Young Adult Women's Ministry, under the supervision of the associate pastor. The women are provided the teachings of Jesus as they listen to topics from leaders on Scripture, personal hygiene and etiquette; as well as the use of skits to demonstrate their learning. FLAME's Women Retreat program is designed to address growth in the areas of: teamwork, finance, life

skills, relationships, education, law enforcement, and domestic violence prevention and other community concerns.

Community Involvement

FLAME in partnership with local area churches remains a central and pivotal point within the Washington County School Board's Diversity Recruitment Task Force addressing the lack of educational diversity hiring and achievement programs within the Washington County Public School (WCPS) system. WCPS has since re-examined their minority hiring deficiencies and have aggressively instituted a minority recruiting program at several Historically Black Colleges & Universities. This has been essential in assisting WCPS in overcoming perceived discrimination and eliminating barriers that hinder equal opportunities.

Community leaders have recognized FLAME's civic work and inspiration by seeking the church's leadership and guidance involving community activism. This was demonstrated in September 2016 when the Hagerstown, MD Police Department came under fire after a video surfaced of what appeared to be the abuse and subsequent handcuffing of an African American teenage girl who was also pepper sprayed in the back of a police cruiser. The incident subsequently went viral to over 2 million viewers. The Hagerstown Chief of Police personally requested the pastor of FLAME's assistance in reviewing the body camera videos of the incident in question and assist in resolving the community's concerns at a protest outside of the police station involving over 100 concerned citizens.

Knowing the community, the concerns, and fears, the pastor was able to diffuse the temperament of the protestors by leading them in an impromptu prayer circle that reduced the chance of violence and fostered the opportunity for a productive law enforcement and community dialogue. After the prayer, there were no arrests or injuries as the protest concluded on a peaceful note. The pastor's faith and efforts helped establish a stronger relationship between the community and the police department which paved the way toward transparency in police investigations.

By invitation, I was ask to speak at the Washington City Council public forum the following week, in which I advised the council that the police did not fail in the investigation of the incident involving the teenager; but quoting the African adage that "it takes a village to raise a child"⁵; in this particular case we all failed. The community must correct this and in doing so, there has to be an intentional willingness to build bridges using the *Beloved Community* as a baseline. This incident was a symptomatic issue associated with the teenager's failure to respectfully communicate with the police at the scene; and the *Beloved Community* failed to train her up by not being effective leaders, guardians and mentors of this community.

Distinguished Honors and Recognitions

Being nominated by the United States Air Force for the prestigious 2017 Roy Wilkins award for working in the community to support and expand the tenets of civil

5. Fisher, Philip A. "It Takes a Family to Raise a Child." *Human Development* 57, no. 5 (2014): 313–18. <https://doi.org/10.1159/000366027>.

rights, human rights, equal opportunity, and human relations civil rights within the community was a great honor. I was also recognized and presented the 2017 Distinguished Alumnus Award by the Alumni/ae Association of United Theological Seminary, Class of 2013. The journey as a missions pastor has allowed me to passionately mentor other pastors in the community and successfully implement community programs which embrace teamwork, leadership values, responsibilities and practical life skills which directly involve community achievement programs; as well as life-learning outreach for a diverse community. This is in correlation with the hypothesis of this project of how using new methodologies of openness, stimulation and discussion allows for the formulation of leadership development while passing on the values of Black Theology, leadership skills and discipleship.

Significant Ministries

The drug interdiction program sponsored by FLAME in partnership with the Washington County Health Department in Opioid detection and reporting continues to stand on the frontline in addressing community, national, and international concerns, while being vigilant in prayers of health, love, peace, harmony and wisdom. To meet and exceed the ministry objectives and priorities of the church going forward, while also meeting the needs of the community. FLAME and The Life Center International Church shall continuously and collectively implement strategies to train all members in Christian discipleship; Christian and church leadership; the history and significance of the Church;

God's biblical principles; self-care; and social development which all should be applied in daily living.

In championing the work of the *Beloved Community*, a new committee (named Champions for Life) will work with residents to address domestic violence, Opioid addiction, illiteracy, suicide, guilt and spiritual guidance. Understanding that healthy guilt helps us find and keep healthy boundaries, it can in some cases act as a beacon to what God is leading one to do in order to have a better spiritual life. This often-misunderstood emotion can be an agent of redemption in life by providing life experiences that can help initiate a change for the better to turn suffering into meaning; and to create a greater responsibility for an individual's life and behavior.

With proper guidance, one can learn that guilt can free us from behaviors that enslave and create destructive attitudes and appetites. It can be a path toward both liberty and responsibility—it is essential to psychological and spiritual growth. People who suffer under the weight of this burden have a specific spiritual deficiency; they do not yet understand God's grace and atoning work through Christ. In some cases, these individuals may have been bullied or received too much criticism as young adults, which gave them a hyperactive conscience to bare false witness against themselves. They have the disease to please others making them too easily influenced and even manipulated by others, among other problems. Those who are burdened by constant and false guilt are unable to forgive themselves and have an inability to forgive others or themselves with the up-lifting guidance they need.

FLAME's pastoral mentoring has been designed to go beyond the walls of the church and personal walls; understanding that just because the church feeds the

community once a week during service does not mean they are receiving the proper spiritual sustenance throughout the week. When we open the doors of the church for someone to receive God, the church must be ready to go outside of the church and counsel and nurture those that are in need.

Civil Rights and Civil Disobedience

I am a product of the 1950's; whose core was baptized by the fires of the 1960's Civil Rights Movement and whose parents were not able to vote until 1965. The fluctuation of our advances (moral, ethical, legal, etc.,) and losses are often difficult to measure with the ongoing deterioration in our laws, civil rights, culture, and history, in addition to holding on to the past for far too long. It is perplexing to grasp the direction the church should or must take to impose change; not for the sake of what was, but more so what will be if we do not remain vigilant.

In less than a year after planting, FLAME has witnessed what happens when a community fails to exercise the right to vote. Low income homes are quickly foreclosed; gentrification exploits the disenfranchised; and the community witnesses every day what happens to those individuals and families who have been torn apart; who have come to this country not just for a better life, but also the love of their new country. Each generation is now faced with the reality of out of control healthcare cost, reduction in funding for Historically Black Colleges and Universities (HBCUs) and Arts and Humanities are facing a deliberate agenda of having their funding reduced or terminated. Who will answer the call?

The President's Committee on the Arts and the Humanities was created in 1982 under President Reagan and acts as an advisory committee to the White House on cultural issues. Seventeen members of the White House advisory panel on the Arts and Humanities resigned in 2018 in response to the forty-fifth President of the United States' divisive comments on the deadly violence in Charlottesville, Va. His actions led to this statement by the seventeen members of the Committee on the Arts and the Humanities to publicly state,

Reproach and censure in the strongest possible terms are necessary following your support of the hate groups and terrorists who killed and injured fellow Americans in Charlottesville. The false equivalencies you push cannot stand. Supremacy, discrimination, and vitriol are not American values, the letter said. 'Your values are not American values.'⁶

In Martin Luther King, Jr.'s book, *Why We Can't Wait*, he confronts the just and unjust law and the difference between the two. He reminds the world that, "a just law is a man-made code that squares with the moral law or the law of God. An unjust law is a code that is out of harmony with the moral law. Any law that uplifts human personality is just. Any law that degrades human personality is unjust."⁷ He establishes for the reader that unjust laws are not grounded in God's eternal law. Who will answer the call? Surely, it will not be by the administration.

In 2019, the world has witnessed the moral degradation of core values and mutual respect. This moral degradation may be what God is moving the world to do; that is to come together in prayer for wisdom, guidance and the power of the Holy Spirit who is

6. "All 17 members of White House arts panel resign to protest Trump's response to Charlottesville." Los Angeles Times. Accessed November 26, 2017. <http://www.latimes.com/politics/washington/la-na-essential-washington-updates-members-of-a-white-house-panel-on-arts-1503065476-htmlstory.html>.

7. Martin L. King, Jr., *Why We Can't Wait* (New York, NY: Harper & Row, 1964), 82.

called upon by His church to make a change in defeating the forces of divisiveness, willful ignorance, and fear which demands our intelligence, courage and collective action. FLAME has been empowered and is answering the call. "Then I heard the voice of the Lord saying, whom shall I send? And who will go for us?" And I said, "Here am I. Send me!"(Isa 6:8)

Opportunities through Weakness

The officers and members of FLAME continuously examine the strengths and weaknesses of the church in a deliberate attempt to grow a stronger church through building a gospel-based membership, Bible study participation, increase signage, attract young adults, draw greater support, mentoring and guidance from the AME District. Realizing that there is a tremendous amount of opportunity and growth potential, FLAME has been blessed to be gifted with a piano and organ and continues to tap into the growing non-church-going population through song and pre-recorded musical selections.

There is a deliberate campaign in Washington County spearheaded by FLAME to partner with newer local churches in developing a grant writing program for all non-profit organizations. FLAME has positioned itself to be a leadership and mentoring platform for the third and fourth year BOE students in the Second District of the AMEC. In addition to increasing the church's ministries beyond the walls, FLAME provides sponsorship to local sports and community activities and acquired a section of road to maintain under the Maryland Clean Highway Program.

Church Self-Assessment

The church self-assessment program allows the church leadership to come face-to-face with assessing the needs, challenges, barriers and goals of the church. The self-assessment program will determine if the church is on track in key areas: making disciples a priority, does the church share the gospel regularly, is there a priority in conversions, identify financial and administrative shortfalls? If not, what areas need to change?

In teaming with the Life Center International Church, a newly planted non-denominational church in Washington County, it is anticipated that the use of this process will help the churches reflect inwardly and provide understanding of the internal barriers and assist the pastors in developing systematic leadership traits in challenging the membership to have an opportunity to use their spiritual gifts, forge deeper bonds and bring the laity and clergy closer together to resolve any and all deficiencies.

These insights (although not tested during this project), could assist in what promotes or prevents growth—how new members are received—how the church is perceived by the community as written in the book of Galatians, “But each one must carefully scrutinize his own work [examining his actions, attitudes, and behavior], and then he can have the personal satisfaction and inner joy of doing something commendable without comparing himself to another.” (Gal 6:4).

The need for wisdom is a tool that is well written in the book of Proverbs, “Through [skillful and godly] wisdom a house [a life, a home, a family] is built, and by understanding it is established [on a sound and good foundation], and by knowledge its rooms are filled with all precious and pleasant riches” (Prv 24:3-4). FLAME expects to

benefit by implementing the Biblical and self-assessment model in the near future; thereby allowing all members to have input and examine the crucial components within the process. FLAME will keep in mind that all voices are equally relevant.

Just as patients are required to get annual physicals and engage in preventive measures to promote maximum physical health; faith-walkers should do the same with the church so that they too will obtain maximum spiritual health. The membership will be able to provide insight and have input in the process allowing for clarity on the health and vitality of the church; and provide hope for the future direction of the church. In addition, the assessment will recognize the strengths, weaknesses, best practices, prayerfully allowing the church leadership to accurately identify and assess the health of the church rather than identify anecdotal information.

Conclusion

With the support of FLAME's Presiding Elder, there will be an earnest attempt to gather data using surveys, demographics, focus groups, interviews, and statistical data to evaluate the data, compile/review the report(s) and disseminate the initial data collection using the self-assessment tool which shall include the: (a) name of the church, (b) age of congregation, (c) physical address (years at present location), (d) average Sunday attendance, (e) number of adult members, (f) median age of membership, (g) number of members under eighteen years of age, (h) number of members retired/disabled/unemployed or on a fixed incomes, (i) spiritual gifts and annual tithing income.

The launch of this process with Life Center International Church began on January 2018 through June 2018, in six phases. Phase - 1, Identify the stakeholders; Phase – 2, data collection; Phase – 3, writing; Phase – 4, evaluation of the data; Phase – 5, sharing the data with the congregation; and Phase- 6, moving forward to project completion. The pastor acknowledged the usefulness of this tool and is requesting more time to determine the outcome of the data and how to utilize the data effectively.

The book of James stresses the necessity of putting one's faith into action. He is viewing those around him as people not objects whose needs he places above himself; and that we must be doers who act, "But those who look into the perfect law, the law of liberty, and persevere, being not hearers who forget but doers who act--they will be blessed in their doing." (James 1:25). He points to the heart of our being by asking if all the faith and good works you feel and do is internalized and not projected outwardly in good faith; the work and deeds are dead.

It is speculated that church growth, especially through attracting new believers, will happen mostly because of leadership style, age, size of the church congregation; and that younger churches are more flexible and more outreach oriented. In addition, smaller churches are expected to be more likely to grow, as they are supposedly more efficient in their management of members and mission and are more relationship oriented. The synergy between FLAME and The Life Center International aligns with the hypothesis that church growth works best when working together to produce an effect that is greater than the sum of individual efforts; yet still allowing the two churches to create an independent vision for the respective churches, embracing creative servant leadership development, and encouraging the community to attend church.

The servant-leaders of the two churches have demonstrated the desire to serve and mentor others; while simultaneously becoming healthier, wiser, more autonomous and desirous to become Jesus servants while evangelizing to the community, building unity, mutuality, and interconnectedness of a well-functioning organization within the body of Christ. We are resolved to note that Jesus' most obvious leadership style was that of a servant-leader, who said of himself, "For the Son of Man came not to be served but to serve, and to give his life as a ransom for many." (Mrk 10:45). The implementation of the synergistic analysis of FLAME and The Life Center will prayerfully become a template for other churches to implement.

CHAPTER TWO

BIBLICAL FOUNDATION

The inclusion of a standardized mentoring program as mentioned in chapter one, introduced the concept of a continuous observation in the mission plant process which could result in a successful church planting process. The Biblical Foundation used in this chapter is 1 Kings, which supports and exemplifies the biblical leadership and mentoring requirements exhibited in the relationship of Elijah and Elisha. Gene Rice, in his book entitled *Under God: A Commentary on the book of 1 Kings*, provides the following insight, “Elisha begins his career as an apprentice, serving as Elijah's attendant.”¹ We all have been gifted with leadership qualities; and we must be prepared under the watchful eye of invested mentors when being assimilated into a leadership role in the body of Christ. Identifying, mentoring and evaluating missions pastors under God’s desire is for all to serve selflessly in ministry which must be brought forward throughout the mentoring relationship.

The story of Elijah and Elisha is one of the Bible’s illustrations of mentorship which allows the reader to visualize and embrace the importance of a mentoring relationship. In Elijah’s first contact with his future mentor, Elisha willingly walks away

1. Gene Rice, *Nations Under God: A Commentary on the book of 1 Kings* (Grand Rapids, MI: WMB. Eerdman’s Publishing Co., 1990), 165.

from his job, his family, and the life he had built to follow after a man offering to be his mentor. Elisha killed his oxen and destroyed the yoke, giving the proceeds to his neighborhood. This is the equivalent of selling one's prize possessions and throwing a party with the funds left over before leaving. This brings to mind the sacrifice a protégé (during Biblical times) must have been willing to make in order to spend quality time focusing on the teachings and life of a mentor before qualifying for independence.

Much can be learned when taking the time to observe how a mentor relates to others; as well as the struggles through their own successes and limitations as read in the Elijah and Elisha relationship. Elisha would later ask for and earn a double portion; however, had he not first offered himself as a servant to Elijah, in all probability, he might have remained a farmer and may never have been anointed to perform the amazing miracles that blessed him and the lives of so many others. Elijah's instruction of anointing came after a successful battle against the prophets of Baal as read in 1 Kings. Prior to Elijah taking any actions, he was at a low point in his life, hiding in a cave, fearful of being killed by Jezebel. His fear was made clear in 1 Kings, "Ahab told Jezebel all that Elijah had done, and how he had killed all the prophets with the sword. Then Jezebel sent a messenger to Elijah, saying, so may the gods do to me and more also, if I do not make your life as the life of one of them by this time tomorrow" (1Kgs 19:1-2). God showed grace and mercy upon the life of Elijah helping him overcome the adversities of life by the threats from Queen Jezebel.

Elijah spoke these words to God saying, "I have been very zealous for the Lord God Almighty. The Israelites have rejected your covenant, torn down your altars, and put your prophets to death with the sword. I am the only one left, and now they are trying to

kill me too. The Lord said, go out and stand on the mountain in the presence of the Lord, for the Lord is about to pass by” (1 Kgs 19:10-11). The Lord heard the words of Elijah and sent an angel to the weary and troubled prophet. 1 Kings tells the reader that, he looked and there at his head was a cake baked on hot stones and a jar of water. He ate and drank and laid down again. The angel of the Lord came a second time, touched him, and said, “Get up and eat, otherwise the journey will be too much for you” (1 Kgs 19:6-8). After regaining his strength and traveling for forty-days and nights to Horeb mount of the gods, the Lord advised Elijah to return from where he had come, stating that, “the Lord is about to pass by” (1 Kgs 19:11). Elijah was obedient to God’s call and traveled back the way he came, to the Desert of Damascus, where he found Elisha plowing with twelve yokes of oxen. Are the twelve oxen symbolic of Jesus’ twelve disciples; an act of preparation through mentoring?

Elijah approached him, bequeathing him with his cloak; thereby identifying Elisha as his successor by the anointing that God had directed. This made it clear that Elisha was to be his successor. This appointment suggests a Spirit-led and driven transition of authority and leadership in which both the appointment and the abilities were exclusively the work of God. Elisha seem to understand the significance of this symbolic gesture as he willingly gave up the life, he had to follow his mentor. The text also describes this initial action of Elijah placing his mantle upon Elisha as a result of his obedience to God’s instruction in appointing a successor.

The passing of Elijah’s mantle to Elisha will continue to be a powerful symbol of prophetic vocation, obedience and prophetic succession throughout the Elijah-Elisha

mentoring relationship. We also see the reluctance of Elisha accepting the inevitable departure of Elijah and his outlook on life after his mentor's departure.

This also captures the transition of Elisha into the role of leadership as written by Cornel West in his book, *Race Matters*. West examines the most urgent issues confronting African Americans today, from discrimination to despair, and how contemporary leadership might address them. West writes, "the major enemy of black survival in America has been and is neither oppression nor exploitation but rather the nihilistic threat-that is, loss of hope and absence of meaning."² The mentoring relationship requires a commitment on the part of both parties and the belief that the requirements are greater on the protégée than that of the mentor is illustrated with the Elijah and Elisha relationship.

Then Elijah said to him, "Stay here; for the Lord has sent me to the Jordan. But he said, "As the Lord lives, and as you yourself live, I will not leave you. So, the two of them went on" (2 Kgs 2:6). As time progressed, Elisha endured many tests prior to Elijah's ascension into heaven. On three occasions Elijah told Elisha to stay behind, each time he refused to leave his mentor's side. Presumably while others were watching from a distance, Elisha wanted a personal view of what God was about to do to Elijah. Elisha would be anointed with a double portion not because he asks, but because he persevered.

When they had crossed, Elijah said to Elisha, tell me what I may do for you, before I am taken from you. Elisha said, please let me inherit a double share of your spirit. He responded, you have asked a hard thing; yet, if you see me as I am being taken from you, it will be granted you; if not, it will not. As they continued walking and talking, a chariot of fire and horses of fire separated the two of them, and Elijah ascended in a whirlwind into heaven (2 Kings 2:9-11).

2. Cornel West, *Race Matters* (Boston, MA: Beacon, 1993), 15.

The lessons learned in this relationship is that regardless of how hard or difficult a situation in life may get, stay close to your mentor.

Elisha's faith had not diminished after Elijah had ascended into heaven. His call continued in his ability to foretell certain events when the Lord spoke to him about future events. 2 Kings 3:16-17 teaches the reader that the hand of God rested upon Elisha and the word of God foretold that this valley full of ditches will be filled and there would be no signs of wind nor rain; but the valley will be filled with water, and all will drink. These texts help to substantiate the argument for mentoring and leadership development through the intentional identification and development of pastors called by God, and mentored by church leadership, to ultimately fulfill church leadership roles. The argument for Godly leadership development in the church and the parallel leadership development of Elisha through his obedience to his spiritual leader allowed him to acquire the bountifulness of leadership through the Holy Spirit.

The biblical relationship between Elijah and Elisha and countless other gifted prophets, writers and theologians are essential references for the identification and development of future church leaders and mentoring programs in the formulation of church planting and growth opportunities in the twenty first century. The theme of mentoring correlates with Dr. King's book, *Strength to Love*, highlights the perseverance of disciplined nonconformists and the value of their critical thinking. King states,

The hope of a secure and livable world lies with disciplined nonconformists, who are dedicated to justice, peace, and brotherhood. The trailblazers in human, academic, scientific, and religious freedom have always been nonconformists. Any cause, that concerns the progress of mankind, put your faith in the nonconformist!³

3. Martin L. King, Jr., *Strength to Love*. (Philadelphia, PA: Fortress Press, 1981, ©1963), 11.

Elijah spoke the Word of God in Israel and God confirmed His prophetic office through the manifestation of His Word, as well as through miracles. Upon raising the widow of Zarephath's son from the dead in 1 Kings 17:23-24, the woman commented that she knew Elijah to be a prophet of God and that the word from his mouth was truth. The authenticity of Elijah as a prophet continued to evolve throughout his ministry. Comparatively, Elisha's authenticity is validated through God's use of Elijah to commission him; and this commission was confirmed through the gifts (charismata), signs and wonders that Elisha would later perform to increase God's glory.

Russell R. Byrum provides these comments concerning charismata, "These gifts are supernatural abilities bestowed upon Christians by the Spirit of God to equip them for the service of the church and the up building of the kingdom of God."⁴ Elijah's spiritual abilities were for the service of God and His kingdom; not for self-glorification which was further reflected in the mentoring of Elisha. As the mantle is moved from Elijah to Elisha, there is also the transfer and elevation of the prophetic abilities that are important for Elisha to succeed. In Hans Kung book entitled, *Essentials of Evangelical Theology*, he writes, "the charisms of the Spirit do not refer to innate talents or powers but to potentialities that are created, aroused, and appealed to by the Holy Spirit."⁵ As with Elijah, Elisha's transfer to the prophetic office came with the spiritual abilities necessary for the fulfillment of his call and the anointed abilities reflect the operations of the Lord in Elijah and Elisha's alliance to increase God's glory. This transfer is evident in Elisha's

4. Russell R. Byrum, *Christian Theology* (Anderson, IN: Warner Press, 1982), 391.

5. Donald G. Bloesch, *Essentials of Evangelical Theology, Volume 2, Life, Ministry, and Hope*, (Peabody, MA: Prince Press, 1998), 107.

first display of the charisma in 2 Kings 2:14, where he divided the Jordan River. In 2 Kings 2:15, the company of prophets testifies, “The Spirit of Elijah is resting on Elisha.” Elisha could not have been taught spiritual abilities; they were the work of the Spirit moving through him.

This affirmation is a reminder that there must be a continuous communication with God upon being anointed to serve in any ministerial capacity. It is important to note that the identification and development of the spiritual gifts of each protégé as they mature in their personal relationship with Christ, it is incumbent upon the mentor(s) that they prepare the missions pastor as much as possible to face the realities and dynamics of planting a church.

In 2013, the pastor, officers and members of FLAME, requested the assistance and permission of the AME Church and Washington County community in finding and leasing a location to establish a new church service for the growing community that teaches and preaches the Word of God in such a manner that it pushes one to have a conversation about or with God. His love as demonstrated through the spiritual obedience of the officers and members of the church must teach the Word in a manner that will provide guidance and fulfill their God-given purpose and be a church with an Elijah-Elisha leadership and mentoring relationship. A church with an Elijah-Elisha leadership methodology can take root in any community, and embrace the words, “But sanctify the Lord God in your hearts and be ready always to give an answer to every man who asketh you a reason for the hope that is in you, with meekness and fear (gentleness and respect)” (1 Pet. 3:15).

Not every pastoral or leadership appointment is about who is to be chosen as a result of somebody hearing God's directive; however, it must be abundantly clear when identifying candidates for church planting and leadership, that there should be an unquestionable relationship with God and the senior leadership to facilitate Spiritual guidance in the nomination and selection process. Just as Elijah looked to Elisha, the focus of future generation of pastors should be rooted within both the current and future generation's capacity for spiritual preparation, pastoral development, and their ability to receive and provide sustained leadership, stability, and growth in the church and community.

The spirit of leadership within the church can be inspired in a single moment; as well as being developed over time, as written in the book of Numbers, "then the LORD came down in the cloud and spoke with him, and he took some of the power of the Spirit that was on him and put it on the seventy elders. When the Spirit rested on them, they prophesied--but did not do so again" (Num. 11:25). This relationship allowed for the assimilation of knowledge from the teacher to the student(s) so that all were in receipt of their Spiritual assignments. The Holman Old Testament Commentary, I and II Kings states, "Elisha recognized that he had been called by God to be his disciple. He pursued Elijah with a declaration of his intention to follow this startling calling."⁶ God is filling the vessels with Spiritual waters as illustrated with Elisha, who recognized the weight of the responsibility he was about to be blessed with, spiritual leadership. 2 Kings 2:1-14 reminds the reader that when the prophet Elijah was taken up to heaven in a chariot of

6. Max Andres and Gary Inrig, *Holman Old Testament Commentary: I & II Kings* (Nashville, TN: Broadman and Holman Publishers, 2002), 164.

fire, Elisha picks up Elijah's mantle, promptly invokes the name of the LORD and proceeds to perform the same miracles with the mantle that Elijah had previously left behind.

For the African American Christians, the Bible has and will always be the rudimentary source for embracing the reliance in having faith in God and providing the leadership that is needed in today's churches. As Dale Andrews writes in his book entitled, *Practical Theology for Black Churches*,

The early African Americans were interested in God's will for them. They focused on God's activity in human history and life in the Spirit. They did not perceive their devotion to the Bible as anti-intellectual. Rather, they accepted it as a book of very real accounts of God, Christ, and God's people.⁷

When identifying candidates for leadership within the Black church, the black diaspora aligns itself with an intimate relationship with God in facilitating the Spiritual direction of the church leadership. In the words of Cain Hope Felder concerning the black diaspora,

The Bible has come to occupy a central place in the religions of the black diaspora (dispersion from the African homeland). The biblical narrative has inspired and captivated those in the black churches. The Bible has given meaning amid conditions that have often been oppressive, and it has served as a basis of hope for a liberated and enhanced material life.⁸

The term African Diaspora commonly refers to the mass dispersion of millions of African natives during the Transatlantic Slave Trades from the sixteenth to the nineteenth centuries. Individuals were stolen from their countries, homes and lands in Western and

7. Dale P. Andrews, *Practical Theology for Black Churches: Bridging Black Theology and African American Folk Religion* (Louisville, KY: Westminster John Knox, 2002), 19.

8. Cain Hope Felder, *Troubling Biblical Waters: Race, Class, and Family* (Maryknoll, NY: Orbis, 1989), 6.

Central Africa and relocated throughout the Americas and the Caribbean. These individuals were separated from their families; stripped of their tribal and cultural identities; forced to reject their religious traditions; dehumanized and deemed as less than human; and forcibly enslaved waiting for the day that God would send an Elisha.

Elijah heard God's clarion voice as it related to Elisha's leadership and responded through obedience, mentoring and spiritual purpose. *The Smyth and Helwys Bible Commentary* speaks to this reality, stating, "Elijah has been mandated to anoint Elisha, but he does not, instead he throws his mantle over him...we may simply take the two dramatic actions - anointing, wrapping in a mantle - as synonymous in their significance. Either way, Elisha is recruited as the follower and successor of Elijah."⁹ This appointment was unquestionably a call for Elisha to serve and adhere to the guidance of Elijah so that he may learn about his role as the next generation Prophet. *Clarke's Commentary* seems to consider the views of both an appointment and a protégé. Clarke writes, "[Elijah] cast his mantle upon him...Either this was a ceremony used in a call to the prophetic office, or it indicated that he was called to be the servant of the prophet. The mantle off pallium, was the peculiar garb of the prophet."¹⁰

The action of throwing the cloak on the ground rather than placing it upon the shoulders of the protégé is confusing when viewing it from a twenty-first century perspective. This appears to be more of an act of defiance rather than accepting that Elisha was to be Elijah's successor. However, the book of Matthew teaches otherwise, "a

9. Walter Brueggemann, *Smyth and Helwys Bible Commentary: 1 & 2 Kings* (Macon, GA: Smyth and Helwys Publishing Inc., 2000), 238-239.

10. Adam Clarke, *Clarke's Commentary: Volume 1* (Nashville, TN: Abingdon Press, 1833), 463.

very large crowd spread their cloaks on the road, while others cut branches from the trees and spread them on the road” (Matt 21:8). The importance of preaching in the black church is not how the cloak of responsibility was transferred, but more so how the tradition can be traced to the role of the storyteller and mentors in Africa. The African storyteller was a central figure, similar to the role that today’s black preacher has assumed in African American churches. Andrews writes, “the preacher, as the central figure in the black religious experience, has been viewed as the person called by God, who is appointed to tell the story, thus offering hope found in the gospel of Christ, who can make a way out of no way.”¹¹

Problem Statement

How can the AMEC better enable itself from a biblical and business perspective to prepare, manage and assist pastors in sustaining church plants in the twenty first century? There must be a new and robust effort within the AMEC to re-evaluate current methodology in leadership development and assess how other denominational mentoring models have been developed and implemented; while also ensuring that a repeatable process in new church planting, leadership development and mentoring is used and routinely evaluated. The narrative of Elijah and Elisha provides a model of development of a future leader and how he came about seeking to be developed into an effective ministerial leader.

11. Andrews, *Practical Theology for Black Churches*, 16-17.

The selection and development of new leaders are identified in the examination of Elijah and Elisha relationship. Elijah aggressively sought out Elisha for the purpose of assuming his office upon his departure from the earthly realm. However, like Elijah, until we are empty of self; we are not ready to be filled by God's Holy Spirit or His divine gifts. We must confess our weakness to Him and become the embodiment of His divine omnipotence.

2 Kings 3:16-17

2 Kings 3:16-17 relates to church planting through the use of ditches as a metaphor which allows the minds to better absorb the Word. If for a moment the reader changes the word '*ditch*' to '*new-work*', and '*empty souls*' that need to be filled; the reader may get a richer perspective of this Scripture. Our lives, the work in the church and community are a lot like open land. There are hills, valleys, gullies, river, lakes, etc., in our lives, and every now and then we need to till the land, irrigate it, remove the weeds, crabgrass, stumps, rocks and other debris or even drain the river. How does one fill the ditches, navigate through the hills, valleys, gullies, river, lakes of the church that is in need of new members looking to be filled with the Living Water? How will the community come to know the church, its works, and members? Just as important... how will the new member know what to say and when to speak with authority?

The language in 2 Kings, 3:16-17 informs the reader that the prophet did not tell the kings that they were to procure the water, but he did say, "Make this valley full of ditches," (2 Kgs, 3:16) that when the water came there might be reservoirs to contain it. If

we expect to obtain the Holy Spirit's blessing, we must prepare for His reception. Making ditches is a Holy order which is given for the members of His church. It requires the church to make ready for the Holy Spirit's power; be prepared to receive that which He is about to give; and ready each man or woman to make the church full of ditches for the reception of the divine floods. The commentary written by Adam Clark explains the terrain in 2 Kings 3:16 as a dry riverbed and further states,

“נַחַל nachal’ may be translated as brook, as it is by the Vulgate and Septuagint. There probably was a river here, but it was now dry; and the prophet desires that they would enlarge the channel, and cut out various canals from it, and reservoirs, where water might be collected for the refreshment of the army and of the cattle; and these were to be made so wide that the reflection of the sun's rays from this water might be the means of confounding and destroying the Moabites.”¹²

There is a work that God would have us do that transcends religion, color, origin, political affiliation and gender. Like the armies of the kings in this segment of the Scripture, they were in dire need of water; and they were unable to supply their logistical needs. The only source of relief had to come from God, if not, they would have died. In the twenty first century, every church, especially the newly planted church, is in the same predicament as the armies of the kings. They are dependent upon God to satisfy their thirst, and dependent on His sovereignty or authority and in need of implementing a strategy for the development and sustainment of the church, members and pastor. Today's planted churches are lying dormant waiting to be released to begin the new work and delivering the Word of God. More importantly, the new church and her senior officers must be made ready for a blessing beyond anything imaginable, and prepared to,

12. “2 Kings 2 Commentary - Adam Clarke Commentary.” StudyLight.org. Accessed September 26, 2019. <https://www.studylight.org/commentaries/acc/2-kings-2.html>.

“make this valley full of ditches” (2 Kgs 3:16). The pluralization of ditches makes us aware that we must dig numerous ditches to catch and retain the multitude of blessings rushing over us.

Similarly, the purpose of a new work is to fill a void (ditch) both within the community and ourselves. Collectively and independently, we must go through a state of preparedness, emptying ourselves until God determines the place and time each of us is to be filled. We are not prepared to be filled by God’s Spirit until we have dug deep below the surface of who we are and become conscious of our weakness and hurts so that we may be filled. In the same tone, we cannot understand love until it has been lost; nor can we understand the fragility of life until it has been whisked away. When will this understanding take place, and how will this be accomplished? Possibly, when the flesh has become weak and immobilized by time, and the consciousness of the world has realized that it is Jesus who saves and not mankind. Until the hand of God has rested upon us, we are not ready to have our ditches filled with the divine living water and eternal energy.

God has a pre-sight into our lives that we are not aware of. He has before us a task that we must fulfill so that He can provide us our blessing. We need to clean house, dig some ditches, and get rid of some baggage. The teachings of Proverbs states, “commit your work to the Lord, and your plans will be established” (Prv. 16:3). Nowhere in the Scripture does it state that the kings were to acquire the water through their own means. They were powerless in accomplishing this task. Anytime we are expecting to obtain the anointing and blessings of the Holy Spirit, we must prepare for an unexpected arrival through earnest prayer.

Biblically Preparing Mission Pastors

The AMEC Discipline is updated every four-years (as recently as 2018) by the principal stakeholders, the Board of Bishops of the AMEC, who have methodically reflected upon the history and contributions of the AMEC Founders: Richard Allen, William Paul Quinn, David A. Payne, and Henry M. Turner. The founders were instrumental in the establishment of the church within the confines of a blacksmith's shop in 1787 (as the AMEC was founded 1816) as each man boldly rejected the colonial scorn of white theological interpretations and racial torment which degraded and referred to persons of African or Caribbean descent as second-class citizens. The AMEC was birthed out of oppression, the protest of slavery and the dehumanization of people of color who had been brought to America from positions of authority or of royalty then forced into slavery.

Having a clear unapologetic understanding of the history of the denomination will assist the new pastor and the congregation in having a greater perspective of the values and sensitivities of the historical foundation of the AMEC. Jack Hayford writes, "I try not to take a stand until I feel empathy and compassion—until I understand what my stand will mean to the other party, how it is difficult or painful for them."¹³ Strictly from a business perspective, why are mission pastors being placed into positions that required them to assume the role of shepherd, teacher, mentor, if they have not been mentored or properly prepared?

13. Marshall Shelley, *Growing Your Church through Training and Motivation: 30 Strategies to Transform Your Ministry* (Minneapolis, MN: Bethany House, 1997), 135.

As of this writing, individuals selected and determined to become itinerant elders are required to fully complete the AMEC Board of Examiners (BOE), obtain their Master of Divinity Degree before they can receive the last of two ordinations as an AME Itinerant Elder. Many new pastors have no idea what they will face upon entering their charge. The excitement of leading a congregation often blinds the unsuspecting new pastor of the underlying issues they will encounter. Just because a preacher is educated at the required level in accordance with the AMEC Discipline and can pray, sing and preach; does not necessarily mean that he or she will be a good leader, administrator, counselor, teacher, etc.

Moses, in counsel with his father-in-law (Jethro) counseled about added responsibilities and biting off more than he could chew concluded, that, much of Moses' time was taken up in answering disputes and inquiries of the people who sought through him to know God's will. Because of the self-imposed workload Moses had, Jethro asked him, "why do you alone sit as judge? You cannot handle it alone" (Ex. 18:17). Jethro's counsel to Moses was to be cognizant not to extend himself to the point of exhaustion; and to also be aware that the people would be worn out waiting for their turns to present their cases to him as he was the counselor of the people as written in Exodus, "Moses was to be the people's representative before God and their teacher, but most judicial matters were to be given to others" (Ex. 18:19).

The question as to how we prepare those planting a church should begin within the AMEC Board of Examiners (BOE) as a specific course of work from a business perspective and not just a biblical lesson. Presumably, within every district of the AMEC, there is either a mission status church or a church that has recently come out of mission

status. The AMEC BOE must take into consideration sponsoring an internship for a missions church; or if none is available, be directed to an already established church under the guidance of a mentor during the last two years of BOE, to receive hands-on training and exposure to the life of a pastor growing a new or established work. A proposal should be made and adopted that the student receive a gas and food stipend provided by the BOE and/or the missions home church. In addition, the BOE students would be provided mentoring within the worship service, by the BOE and Presiding Elder finally providing a perspective of what was learned during their mentoring sessions and recommendations in helping develop new work guidelines within the AMEC.

Property and Finances

The predominate concern from a pastor's perspective is searching for and finding a location at a reasonable cost for conducting the service. Traditional options such as an independent church building, or commercial property can be expensive. The book of Proverbs advises the reader concerning the relationship of the borrower and lender as, "The rich rule over the poor, and the borrower is slave to the lender" (Prv. 22:7). The borrower is never far away from those who lend and those that lend are in the business of making money. Lenders, lease agents, management companies, etc., provide us with a product (loans, buildings, supplies, etc.) which must be paid. Should the borrower or renter fall behind a few days in payments; then the late payment calls will begin. The borrower is then placed into a position of dependence upon the good graces of the lender; so, he/or she must comply with the one in power. The liberties that were formerly

available are gone because of the limitations that debt places on our lives, and that of the church. Being rich or poor, it is through the blood of Christ that allows for Grace.

What is the missions church pastor to do when the property they are operating out of is terminated without cause or justification? This too is a form of debt; the tenants are subject to evictions for cause or non-cause based upon the desires of the property management company or landlord; and more times than not the tenant has little recourse other than to move. How does the church plan around this unexpected eviction, or in legal terminology, the termination of the lease? An eviction notice without cause, unlike an eviction notice for cause, means that the landlord does not have to have any reason to evict a tenant. Because of this, many states require landlords to give either thirty or sixty-day notice to the tenant before being allowed to begin an eviction suit. However, some states that have rent controlled facilities require landlords to give a legally justifiable reason for wanting to end the lease agreement and do not permit landlords to end leases without some justifiable cause. This does not answer the aggravating logistical question: what does the pastor do next, more importantly, where is the mentor?

The first set of emotions in this predicament will be anger followed by, fear, sorrow, and failure. Somewhere in the mist of these emotions there must be prayer and mentoring. As pastors and officers are often reminded by the words of Michael Jackson, “you are not alone.”¹⁴ God is always with and in us and any church is subject to face this same dilemma; prayer, faith, hope, and determination are the keys to spiritual endurance and integrity.

14. Michael Jackson and Janet Jackson, writers. *You Are Not Alone*. Michael Jackson. 1995, CD.

Structuring Finances

Along with the logistical requirements in establishing the church, careful and deliberate consideration must be included in the financial infrastructure of the new church while establishing sound practices and financial methodologies. The pastor by no means can do it all. Funding the planting of a new church will be a pastor's greatest challenge. Many new plants are not provided with a surplus of funds ready to be spent when they start. It is incumbent upon the denomination as a whole to devise legislation that sets aside funding for church planting to include but not limited to: mentoring programs, sustained funding for a period of three to four years, in addition to salary portfolio with benefits similar to other established church pastors. This support, through legislation, will help to secure facilities, execute marketing campaigns, provide equipment for ministry, and underwrite pastoral support. A decisive plan of action must be formulated through the AME legislation to discuss, develop, fund and mentoring related to church planting.

During my interview of Bishop Dr. Harry L. Seawright, President of the Council of AME Bishops and Presiding Prelate of the ninth Episcopal District, he states, "the AME Church must be more committed particularly in the church planting process through legislation, support and revisit evangelism and church growth."¹⁵

During an interview with the Presiding Elder Emeritus Reverend Dr. Louis Charles Harvey, he provided his recommendations powerfully stating, "the AME Church must be challenged to review and adopt a program in all aspects of church planting, finances, mentoring and this should be addressed in the upcoming Quadrennial."¹⁶

15. Bishop Harry L. Seawright, phone interview by author, January 28, 2020.

16. Rev Dr. Louis-Charles Harvey, phone interview by author, January 28, 2020.

The missions pastor must also be guided in aligning the capabilities of the appointed officers (trustees, stewards, etc.,) in accordance with AMEC Discipline of having stewards of the church. Calling the qualified is not what God does, rather, He qualifies the ones who are called and prepares them for work that He wants them to do.

God gracefully uses the body of Christ to do His will so that the church may be strengthened and better positioned to do the work. Pastors, officers and church congregations must trust God when called upon; and the overall leadership within the connectional is ultimately responsible for providing the guidance which will allow the officers and membership to manage the daily operations of the church.

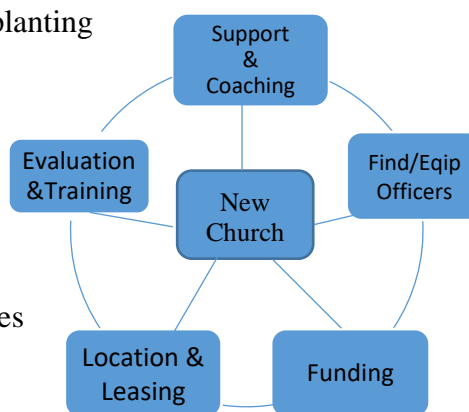
Many new pastors do not have an established financial plan walking in the door; and in many cases, do not know how to establish the church's financial status or when to change the paradigm of the church. There are deeply rooted cultural and institutional challenges that must not be overlooked or taken too lightly when a change occurs. Members of the church often find it unnecessary or uncomfortable to accept change, and resistance will present itself with the words, "*we have always done it this way, why change*", is the battle cry of those who are not comfortable with change or understand the necessity of it. For some people, change poses a real threat to the amount of control they feel which can bring out the best and the worst in any organization.

What are the available resources (other than the AMEC Discipline), training, foundations, strategies and best practices offered outside and outside of the denomination? In grooming new leaders, a process and methodology must be in place to assist a pastor in understanding that there is a circumcision of the heart followed by the incarnation of the Holy Spirit that must take place in the office of ministry. This is

demonstrated through making spiritual life changes, the removal of barriers or biases in relation to a leadership role within the church. It is important that the Spirit's influence is seen in the aspiring pastor, along with the visible manifestation of God operating within them.

Timothy's circumcision was, in a sense, the consecration that preceded his commission. The circumcision was his act of submission, revealing his willingness and readiness to serve in the Gospel of ministry. Timothy actions also symbolizes the coming together of Jews and Greeks under belief in Jesus. In the same manner that a farmer plants vegetable, there is a season, location and methodology for the coming together through church planting. New challenges arise that need constant attention and sometimes requires a dramatic change, training, education and lastly follow-up.

The interconnected processes of church planting cycles when mapped out from a business perspective must be tailored to the uniqueness of the community context and take into consideration how the work of the church matches the needs and challenges of the community. In addition, there must be a strategy to guide decisions related to ministry fruitfulness, community involvement and leadership effectiveness.



Biblical Foundations for Church Planting

The New Testament essentially calls upon the body of Christ to plant churches and share the faith as written in ‘The Great Commission’, (Matt.28: 18-20) which is not just a call to create disciples but to also baptize. In the book of Acts, baptism incorporates a worshipping community with accountability and boundaries and further states,

Then they that gladly received his word were baptized: and the same day there were added unto them about three thousand souls. And they continued steadfastly in the apostles' doctrine and fellowship, and in breaking of bread, and in prayers. And fear came upon every soul: and many wonders and signs were done by the apostles. And all that believed were together and had all things common; and sold their possessions and goods, and parted them to all men, as every man had need. And they, continuing daily with one accord in the temple, and breaking bread from house to house, did eat their meat with gladness and singleness of heart, Praising God, and having favour with all the people. And the Lord added to the church daily such as should be saved. (Acts 2:41-47).

To increase the number of Christians is to increase the membership of the body of Christ through feeding the hungry, clothing the naked and becoming living stones as written in the book of 1Peter,

As you come to Him, the living Stone—rejected by humans but chosen by God and precious to Him— you also, like living stones, are being built into a spiritual house to be a holy priesthood, offering spiritual sacrifices acceptable to God through Jesus Christ. I lay a stone in Zion, a chosen and precious cornerstone, and the one who trusts in him will never be put to shame. Now to you who believe, this stone is precious. But to those who do not believe, the stone the builders rejected has become the cornerstone, and, a stone that causes people to stumble and a rock that makes them fall (1 Pet 2:4-8).

Mentoring is essential to any appointment as it provides an opportunity for an individual to obtain hands-on life experience and cultivate an intimate mentoring relationship with their mentor. Gene Rice, author of *Nations Under God: A Commentary on the book of 1 Kings* writes, “Elisha begins his career as an apprentice, serving as Elijah's attendant. This is the only account in the Old Testament of such an entry into the prophetic office,

but it may have been customary at the time.”¹⁷ The visible leadership qualities must be intentionally and carefully cultivated in order to be effective for determined leaders of the church.

The New Church

Will the DNA of the new church blend with the surrounding community? Where shall the work be planted and what is the growth plan? As with all things in life, it originated from someone, someplace and must have a place to learn, grow and sustain itself. We may find the roots in the Methodist, Baptist, Catholic or Pentecostal Church that stimulate the inclusionary growth of the newly planted church. The AMEC is a church which profoundly speaks of inclusion and not exclusion. It is a predominantly African American, however, the history of the AME Discipline states,

The AMEC grew out of the Free African Society (FAS) which Richard Allen, Absalom Jones, and others established in Philadelphia in 1787. When officials at St. George’s MEC pulled blacks off their knees while praying, FAS members discovered just how far American Methodists would go to enforce racial discrimination against African Americans. Hence, these members of St. George’s made plans to transform their mutual aid society into an African congregation. In 1794 Bethel AME was dedicated with Allen as pastor. To establish Bethel’s independence from interfering white Methodists, Allen, a former Delaware slave, successfully sued in the Pennsylvania courts in 1807 and 1815 for the right of his congregation to exist as an independent institution.¹⁸

Churches today have a greater amount of flexibility in how their services are conducted and how they embrace new members. Clergy who bring new ideas into the body of

17. Gene Rice, *Nations Under God: A Commentary on the book of 1 Kings* (Grand Rapids, MI: WM B. Eerdmans Publishing Co., 1990), 165.

18. African Methodist Episcopal Church Website. *History of the African Methodist Episcopal Church*. <https://www.ame-church.com/our-church/our-history/> (accessed 5 March 2018).

Christ, in addition to an unbridled creativity, possess a willingness to build upon the rock as written in the book of Matthew, “And I tell you that you are Peter, and on this rock, I will build my church, and the gates of Hades will not overcome it” (Matt 16:18). God grows His church by adding those who He converts and mentors.

The models of Elijah--Elisha and Paul--Timothy help the reader to understand God's intentionality about the continuation of His work and how He works through and with leaders to develop and shape others. 2 Kings 3:16 invites us to open ourselves up by digging deep into our prayers and exposing our inner core to God so that He can heal and filled the empty and hurt places within us.

Jesus, being the most influential mentor who ever lived, used His transformational approach in leadership during His ministry which identified and developed leaders that were capable, competent, and who possessed components of His character; allowing them to seamlessly continue the work He began. Leadership development and mentoring was important to Jesus. He was intentional about the preparation of His followers. His initial choice of leaders resulted in twelve disciples with the Word of God as His working tools. Richard D. Nelson argues, “The disciple of Jesus must make the same ruthless break with the past that Elisha did in verse twenty-one, putting forth one's hand "against" the plow (to burn it) without looking back. The Elisha journey is a call to a commitment which burns all bridges to other loyalties.”¹⁹ In order for the church and her officers to move forward successfully, there are some things (friends, relationships, emotions, etc.) that might need to be left behind when forming a desire to live for and serve God.

19. Richard D. Nelson, *Interpretation: A Bible Commentary for Preaching and Teaching, First and Second Kings* (Louisville, KY: John Knox Press, 1987), 128-129.

The officers and members of the new church must be prepared to receive the downpour which He is about to give. The newly appointed Pastor of Family Life Ministry African Methodist Episcopal Church came to the realization very quickly that there are significant factors that weigh into planting a church; seen and unseen. There is the consideration of location, race relations, and economics, leasing or buying property, the demographics, and the support of the conference leadership.

This is not about Johnny Appleseed sowing seeds wherever he may travel and hoping the seeds find a good place to grow. It is about landscaping, tilling the spiritual soil, planting deep roots, watering, growing and harvesting a Spirit-led life-force. The book of Matthew teaches, “The field is the world, and the good seed stands for the people of the kingdom. The weeds are the people of the evil one, and the enemy who sows them is the devil. The harvest is the end of the age, and the harvesters are angels” (Matt 13:28-30). Changing the word landscaping to climbing over the hills of discontentment to pulling ourselves out of the gullies of despair, social injustice and drain the river of bitterness and sorrow, the Lord must fill ones soul with the waters of Love and salvation so that he or she may hold dearer the words: “Get up, be baptized and wash your sin away” (Acts 22:16). The church must get her leaders ready to be ready. God will never plant a church in a place where it will not grow in His time for His purpose and the rationale is, the lack of growth brings no glory to God. Praise, worship, healing and deliverance all work together because without praise and worship -- there is no healing, growth and deliverance. The breakthrough of the church is rooted in praise.

Using the environment of a supply warehouse, receiving, distribution and freight stacking, the warehouse manager receives a series of trucks or train laden freight to the

delivery area which is cleared to receive it. The same can be said of the pastor. Just before the (harvest) planting, the made ready to receive the incoming worshippers. The book of Luke provides instructions on tearing down and building up, “Then he said, this is what I’ll do. I will tear down my barns and build bigger ones, and there I will store my surplus grain” (Lk.12:18). The church is being instructed to get ready for the Holy Spirit to tear down and build up processes; and she cannot afford to sit back and do nothing and think God will just make it happen without the church acting in His favor. The leadership of the church must perform accordingly in anticipation that God will work in His supreme manner—during the church’s preparation in faith and prepare actively for what is about to happen.

When the personal valleys of life are tilled, irrigated and rooted in spiritually prepared ground, there must be a sincere expectation of growth in the power of the Holy Spirit as written in the book of Philippians, “For it is God which works in you both to will and to do of His good pleasure” (Php. 2:13). God works in and around all His children; to be lazy because God is always at work is poor reasoning. The Lord created us in His own image and ordained that we, may work together with Him. It is from His throne that He blesses our works. It is our duty to yield ourselves as the tools of God’s divine purpose. Every pastor who plants a new work must yield and acknowledge that when the Lord is about to bless this new work, there must be a mentoring responsibility and continuous, perseverance of service, in the name of Jesus the Christ. If we are to have a blessing from God, we must have ditches ready to receive the bountiful blessings of God as written by J. D. Berkley in the book entitled, “*Making the most of mistakes Vol. 11.*”

Just because we have pain in the Christian life doesn't mean we are outside the will of God. You look through Christian history—Jesus, Paul, Peter, Martin Luther, and the rest—and if people had decided there can't be some pain in the will of God, where would we be?²⁰

Assess and Refine the Process

The expectation of continuously refining the mentoring process will allow for the discovery of flaws, successes, benefits and the development of crucial components needed to improve the mentoring process and the individual. All voices are considered to be equally relevant while examining the work being done, as related to the message in the book of Galatians, “But each one must carefully scrutinize his own work [examining his actions, attitudes, and behavior], and then he can have the personal satisfaction and inner joy of doing something commendable without comparing himself to another” (Gal. 6:4).

Just as we get annual physicals and engage in preventive measures to promote maximum physical health, we should do the same with our spiritual institutions so that it too will be in concert with the book of Proverbs, “Through [skillful and godly] wisdom, a house [a life, a home, a family] is built, and by understanding it is established [on a sound and good foundation], and by knowledge, its rooms are filled with all precious and pleasant riches” (Prv. 24:3-4). As the church leadership provides an assessment into the future of the church, the insight and input in the process will allow for clarity about its health, vitality and prayerfully will offer great hope for the community. Just as the roots of a tree must be planted in the right soil and the right location, so must the church.

20. J. D. Berkley, *Making the most of mistakes Vol. 11* (Carol Stream, IL: Word Books 1987), 107.

In addition, the assessment will recognize the strengths, weaknesses, best practices, and leadership assessments. With the support of leadership, data can be gathered using surveys, demographics, focus groups, interviews, and evaluating the compiled data and disseminating the reports to the officers, members and Presiding Elder. The initial data collection can include, but not be limited to: Name of the church, age of congregation, physical address (years at present location), average Sunday attendance, number of adult members, median age of membership, number of members under eighteen years of age, number of members retired/disabled/unemployed or otherwise on fixed incomes, registered voters and annual tithe income.

Timelines

FLAME and The Life Center anticipates the start of this process to begin on January 2018 through June 2018, in six phases.

Phase - one, identify the stakeholders,

Phase – two, data collection,

Phase – three, writing,

Phase – four, evaluation of the data,

Phase – five, sharing the data with the congregation,

Phase- six, moving forward and phase seven re-evaluating the process after a review of the data.

Pre-script

The following questions were addressed in the prescript analysis:

- What is the antithesis (opposition) in planting a new work?
- What is the process of planting a new church and is it outdated?
- What changes can and should be made in the planting process?
- How is the church achieving outreach?

Post-script

The following mythologies need to be addressed in the postscript analysis:

- Survey the current mission pastors in the Second District
- Build ongoing inter-relationships with “mission church” pastors
- Provide denominational and non-denominational mentors
- Define the process of creating and sustaining a new work
- Leasing or buying property
- Provide a training curriculum for new works
- Institute an evaluation process and provide the Bishop with a report that is incorporated in the church quarterly reports
- Provide significant funding for a set timetable (from the connectional body) of no more than three years with a one-year extension.

Conclusion

Outside of the educational requirements needed in becoming ordained within the AMEC, there has been little to no evolution in the traditional process of how ministers are prepared. This program does not allow the newly ordained clergy, officers and members to come face-to-face with assessing the needs, challenges, barriers, and goals of modern-day church planting. Once the planting process has been redesigned and defined, it will assist in the determination of the collective body of the new church ensuring that it is on track in the following key areas:

- (a) Is the church making disciples?
- (b) Does the church share the gospel regularly?
- (c) Is there a priority in conversions, if not what areas need to change?
- (d) Has the church identified its strength and weaknesses?

This process has the potential to help churches reflect and provide an understanding of the internal culture and relieve the expectation of the pastor in formulating and doing the work with or without support. This process will allow members to have an opportunity to identify and use their spiritual gifts to forge deeper bonds and bring the community, laity and clergy closer to working together. These insights afford opportunities for the church to determine what promotes or prevents growth—how new members are received and how the church is perceived by the community. The final analysis and hypothesis statement of FLAME and The Life Center’s contribution to the outcome of this project is still unknown at this time due to the limitations in time.

Just as Elijah formulated a relationship with Elisha, the focus of current leaders should be on the current generation's capacity for rooted development; as well as the future generation's ability to provide sustained leadership and mentoring in the church and evangelism outside of the church. The work of evangelism is the work of proclaiming the gospel in word and deed, inviting persons to participate in the grace of God, and to join in the mutual care and public ministry of the *Beloved Community* of God's covenant people.

The Salvation and grace offered by Jesus is through faith and grace, not by personal works or charisma. Donald G. Bloesch, in *Essentials of Evangelical Theology* writes, "The charisms of the Spirit do not refer to innate talents or powers but to potentialities that are created, aroused, and appealed to by the Holy Spirit."²¹ Christ (not man) is called our salvation, as He is called our life, our peace, our hope; i.e. He is the author and finisher of all these. It is assumed that all new pastors will be mentored for leadership within the ministry as they are called to serve; (as did Elisha) they too will cultivate spiritual gifts along with observed natural gifts. It is not assumed that there will or will not be a transfer of gifts likened to the Elijah-Elisha narrative, however, it will be important to mentor, identify and develop the spiritual gifts of each pastor as they grow, become rooted in their duties, obligations and their relationship with Christ.

Elijah identified (through God) Elisha as a successor which fulfilled a spiritual mandate, not an institutional need. God spoke to Elijah concerning Elisha's appointment, and Elijah obeyed. The twenty first Century pastor has heeded the call by God to preach

21. Donald G. Bloesch, *Essentials of Evangelical Theology, Volume 2: Life, Ministry, and Hope* (Peabody, MA: Prince Press, 1998), 107.

the Word, shepherd the flock, and evangelize to the lost; in addition to the biblical foundation for growing the church, mobilizing disciples, and bringing in believers. Jesus' command to "come and see" (Jn. 1:39), gives us a key insight into the need for developing environments for providing a safe place for those searching to experience the love of the Lord through the serenity of the gospel. Christians are to encourage those who are seeking to understand the command "follow me" (Mrk. 1:17) and are desirous of becoming followers of Christ who calls us to a lifestyle of discipleship that focuses on a different walk in life.

Spiritual leadership decisions concerning who is to be appointed to a pastoral position will be the result of leadership clearly hearing and yielding to God's command. However, there must be an intimate relationship between God and the church leadership to facilitate the mentoring and spiritual direction in the appointment process of church planting. In some cases, it may just be an observation of talent and choosing a pastor because the gift of the individual addresses a need in and for the community. One cannot dismiss the discipline of prayer and adhering to the calling of God in the process of choosing pastoral candidates.

The selection process in the book of 1 Samuel 3 illustrates that Samuel did not realize at first the Lord was calling him, but Eli, the priest, was able to discern who was calling Samuel, and advise him to answer the Lord directly when He called again. Once Samuel was able to confirm that it was God speaking to him, Samuel spoke the words given to him by Eli, "Now the Lord came and stood there, calling as before, Samuel! Samuel! And Samuel said, "Speak, for your servant is listening" (1 Sam 3:10). This reaffirms the notion that there should be an ongoing dialogue with the missions pastor to

determine if they are able to interpret and articulate the clarion voice of God calling them to serve in a pastoral role whether it is a missions or established churches. God has cast the mantle onto chosen leaders to plant His church in the communities of the unreached and to spread this influence of making disciples.

The faithfulness to God's calling may entail the preparation of others for their own ministries which also calls the church to multiply the influences passed down by the elders of the church. This emulates the words from the book of Matthew, "Therefore, go and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, and teaching them to obey everything I have commanded you. And surely, I am with you always, to the very end of the age" (Matt. 28:19-20).

CHAPTER THREE

HISTORICAL FOUNDATIONS

Chapter two examined the mentoring processes for missions pastor by exploring the scriptural relationship of Elijah and Elisha in the book of Kings as an illustration of the significance of a mentoring relationship. Leaders categorically possess identifiable characteristics that set them apart from their peers because they have been forged in a continuous developmental process shaped outside of their comfortable and conforming frame of understanding, as identified in the Elijah and Elisha relationship.

History has illustrated that the seat of leadership is controversial, divided and often motivated by means not known to others, but validated by God. Malcolm X, Nation of Islam, an American Muslim minister and human rights activist; Nelson Mandela, South African anti-apartheid, South African anti-apartheid revolutionary, political leader, and philanthropist who served as President of South Africa from 1994 to 1999; and Loretta Sanchez, Former Congress Woman of California who served in the United States House of Representatives from 1997 to 2017; are examples of history's great and controversial leaders.

Denmark Vesey, an insurrectionist, a literate, skilled carpenter and leader among African Americans in Charleston, South Carolina; Martin Luther King, Jr., Baptist minister and activist who became the most visible spokesperson and leader in the civil

rights movement; Maxine Waters, Chairwoman, Committee on Financial Services, U.S. Representative for California's forty third Congressional District since 2013; and King Solomon, Jedidiah, according to the Hebrew Bible, Old Testament, Quran, and Hadiths, a wealthy and wise king of Israel who succeeded his father, King David; are additional examples of great leaders.

Sampling the historical and current developments of church and community leaders was essential for constructing and implementing this project. It is important to note that the essence of this project is centered on mentoring and leadership development for newly appointed missions pastors. However, seasoned pastors could also benefit from this project. These concepts inculcate the charge of the pastor who has been infused by the power and authority of God into the unique leadership role in the body of Christ. Leaders of many professions are considered to have (in some, not all cases) high ethical standards conveying a commitment to fairness; and instilling confidence that they and their followers will honor the rules of engagement. Similarly, when leaders clearly communicate their expectations, they attempt to avoid blindsiding their followers ensuring that all have the same agenda. From a Biblical perspective, the pastor should have the heart of a lion, the agility of a gazelle and the humble spirit of a servant according to the book of Mark which reflects upon servanthood, and selflessness,

But Jesus called them to him, and saith unto them, Ye know that they which are accounted to rule over the Gentiles exercise lordship over them; and their great ones' exercise authority upon them. But so, shall it not be among you: but whosoever will be great among you, shall be your minister, and whosoever of you will be the chiefest, shall be a servant of all. For even the Son of man came not to be ministered unto, but to minister, and to give his life a ransom for many. (Mk 10:42-45).

Scripture subscribes that legitimate church leaders have authority and a right to lead others. This authority comes from God and is delegated to the church leaders. The continued effectiveness of any organization depends on leadership and their ability and willingness to invest in individuals within the organization; so that the appointed leader may fill key positions, after receiving the appropriate developmental tools, skills and qualifications which will allow for the sustainable leadership performance and management within the church.

In examining the controversial leadership of Vesey, it brings to mind the words of Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr., who stated, “the trailblazers in human, academic, scientific, and religious freedom have always been nonconformists.”¹ Nonconformists make things happen. They have a path where others may dare not go and speak when others chose to remain silent in ignorance or allegiance.

William Rothwell, Professor of Education (*Workforce Education and Development*), Penn State, formulated a combined succession of planning and management details; that are essential tools which allows a leader to build and establish a sound application to develop a strategic framework of leadership. Rothwell stated, “it is perhaps best understood as an effort designed to ensure the continued effective performance of an organization, division, department or workgroup, by providing for the development, replacement, and strategic application of key people over time.”² This is

1. Martin L. King, Jr., *Strength to Love* (Minneapolis, MN: Augsburg Fortress April 1, 1981, (first published 1963)), 146.

2. William J. Rothwell, *Effective Succession Planning: Ensuring Leadership Continuity and Building Talent from Within* (New York, NY: American Management Association, 1951), 6.

but one of several driving forces behind this project in the development of future mentoring programs for church leaders. The historical research highlights broad details of the pioneering actions of pastors, visionaries, dreamers, and politicians in relation to the various issues they faced within their local communities and churches.

Newly appointed pastors in their first five years will be solicited by a diverse community of publications, solicitors, institutions and mainline denominations that offer training after seminary to stimulate their growth at a dramatic cost. William J. Rothwell, the author of, *Effective Succession Planning: Ensuring Leadership Continuity and Building Talent from Within*, writes,

Just as mainline ministers receive formal training from certain seminaries, evangelicals learn about church-growth methodology within their educational institutions. Instead of looking to denominations and the public nonprofit sector for insights on serving, evangelical ministers look more to leading evangelical publications and their professional networks to target and minister to this group.³

During the 1800's in Charleston, SC, Vesey was considered one of the more controversial black leaders of his time. His transformational leadership approach in ministry is seen in his ability to mentor individuals that were competent, passionate and possessed attributes similar to his character, in hopes of them continuing the work that he birth out of the influence of the African Methodist Episcopal Church (AMEC).

African American theology came about during the antebellum period of American history before the civil war and after the War of 1812. This can also be considered as a theology of suffering because of the brutality of slavery. It was further exacerbated in the South because blacks were denied access to formal education, Constitutional Rights and

3. R. Jeung, *Evangelical and Mainline Teachings on Asian American Identity* (Semeia: 90/910), 216.

basic human privileges; but they had a religious education brought from their native lands to the plantations. The black church was the surviving entity from the diaspora from Africa and other nations of color which provided the foundation of African traditions, hope, a means of socialization and education for black people relegated to slavery, never to return to their native lands.

The soul of the black church originated in Africa, West Indies, Caribbean Islands, etc., this affirmation is witness through the leadership, ingenuity and social presence that became the means of liberation for spiritually equipping those labeled as slaves to those who have evolved into the civil rights leaders of yesterday, today and tomorrow. Because of the significant influence of the black church, Vesey's leadership was destined to be intentional and affirmed as he set about equipping his followers in staging a revolt to free the slaves in Charleston, SC. His model of mentoring influenced today's church leadership development as it relates to implementing processes that produce a continuous evolution of new church leaders who possess the same drive and tenacity as described in the writing of Theodore L. Sylvester, *Slavery Throughout History*:

Denmark Vesey (1767-1822), was a literate and very intelligent black man who had purchased his freedom in January of 1800. Vesey's views and ambitions were spurred by his work with the African Methodist Episcopal (AME) Church, the only independent Black church in Charleston at the time. Within the AME Church, Vesey gave sermons and led Bible Study lessons. As a literate man, he was looked upon as a teacher. His association with the AME Church gave him an outlet to express his views of equality.⁴

Vesey once a slave (owned by Captain Joseph Vesey), established his literacy through the teachings of the AMEC. He became a translator and record keeper to Captain Vesey and

4. Theodore L. Sylvester, *Slavery Throughout History: Almanac* (Boston, MA: UXL, An Imprint of the Gale Group, 2000), 230-231.

saved money by performing side jobs working at lumber mills and repair work. Vesey purchased his freedom after winning a \$1,500.00 in a lottery in South Carolina. At the age of thirty-two, he made an offer to Captain Vesey for \$600 to buy his freedom after being a slave for more than eighteen years. To imagine the exhilaration of becoming a free man and at the same time, having to face the realization that he had been a slave for so many years must have also caused him to deal with a barrage of emotions; to included his hatred of slavery and all of white colonial society. He was about to be independent, but still an outcast, less than equal based on the pigmentation of his skin; yet he still was not free. He had to find a way to fully free himself and the rest of his captive brothers and sisters once and for all, not just from Charleston, but throughout the country.

In the book entitled, *Slave Revolt Leader*, author Lillie Edwards articulates that Vesey needed to outthink, out move and be willing to take calculated risks to first acquire his real freedom before he could secure the freedom of others.

The captain had a new home in Charleston, SC, and needed only a few slaves to perform the task of a cook, butler housekeeper and a coach driver. This left Denmark with little or nothing to do. Joseph Vesey did receive some income from Denmark's work as a carpenter since 1783, he had been hiring himself out throughout Charleston, the captain assumed the responsibility of supervising Denmark's jobs, his salary and his movements. He normally worked not only in town but also at logging sites Twenty miles outside of Charleston.⁵

What would Vesey say if he could witness the racial and gender inequality of today?

Would he declare that we have achieved our freedom? Would he embrace the strides that people of color, women, and other nations have achieved as a significant level of equality in the United States, even though in the twenty first century they still cannot sit in a

5. Lillie J. Edwards and Nathan Irvin Huggins, *Denmark Vesey* (New York, NY: Chelsea House, 1990), 15-16.

coffee shop quietly waiting without being arrested? Would he passionately tell Kanye that slavery was not a choice, but a brutal incarceration of the mind, body, and soul, based on the inculcated (cause or influence) generation of blackness? Like the children of Israel, there is something for us to learn-- impatience with a reliance on self-control.

We must strengthen our position of resistance, have faith, allow God to direct the Spirit of self-control to lead us into maturity, completeness, wisdom, leadership, and finally to be used by Him and cast our eyes upon His miracles of victory. It is time to change our imprisoned focus and stop looking in the rearview mirrors of what was and start looking ahead to what can be. Leadership for some is learned, for some it may be innate and others are thrust into the position with a life-line called faith. The Lord does not call those who are prepared; He prepares those who are called as written in the book of Numbers,

The Lord said to Moses: “Bring me seventy of Israel’s elders who are known to you as leaders and officials among the people. Have them come to the tent of meeting that they may stand there with you. I will come down and speak with you there, and I will take some of the power of the Spirit that is on you and put it on them. They will share the burden of the people with you so that you will not have to carry it alone (Num 11:16-17).

Moreover, we must lean heavily on the blessings and the strength of God who prepares those who are called to move on to new endeavors, new growths and greater blessings while embracing the lessons of non-conformity in life. Noel Leo Erskine’s book entitled, *Plantation Church How African American Religion Was Born in Caribbean Slavery*, argues, “black churches [create] a culture of resistance as Denmark Vesey in North

Carolina and Nat Turner in Virginia facilitated a culture of resistance in the 1830s.”⁶ The leadership development of the rebellion for freedom and organized uprising on the plantations of Haiti was just as significant as the right to vote for the African Americans in the 1960s; both are fighting for a displaced freedom and equality under the law.

During the rebellions for equality, the black church and the souls of blackness was there, creating the culture of rebellion, but also forcing the discussions of literacy, freedom, and equality through the African Diaspora. The knowledge of our African ancestors carried across the oceans shaped the agricultural, food cultivation and religious influences profited by the Anglo-Americans today. By 1818, due to the black church influence and migration, Vesey’s ministry and influence was moving forward in his preaching to slaves throughout the region while drawing upon Scripture. He spoke of the plight of the Israelites and how they gained their freedom. Vesey knew that it would take more than his skills to deliver his people out of slavery, but also a divine modicum of grace and patience which comes about by divine intervention and faith to overcome slavery.

Slave masters used the Bible as a tool to suppress the slave and simultaneously forced inequality and obedience which was routinely countered by Black Theology. Neo L. Erskine addresses the situation in his book entitled, *Plantation Church: How African American Religion Was Born in Caribbean Slavery*, “the problem as the slave master saw it in relation to the church was that in the Vesey Conspiracy, class leaders of the church were often involved and Vesey himself cited Scriptural warrants to support his plans to

6. Noel Leo Erskine, *Plantation Church How African American Religion Was Born in Caribbean Slavery* (New York, NY: Oxford University Press, 2014), 9.

revolt.”⁷ Vesey placed his divine faith in his ability to be still and know what God would have him to strategize on until the Lord was ready to release His providence.

Isaiah’s writings to the children of Israel is similar to what Vesey was encountering. Each of these events came at a bleak period. For forty-years the children of Israel were in a desert waiting for a promised new home. They waited, grumbled and longed for the old ways; even though it meant bondage and servitude. They failed to stop and understand that the miracles of manna and the parting of the Red Sea meant more was on the way in God’s time. They needed self-control and quiet time to reflect upon the fact that God was not through.

From an early age, Vesey did not have much quiet time according to the writings of historian Lillie Edwards,

In 1781, Captain Vesey transported 390 slaves to St. Dominique. Among his cargo was a 14-year-old male who had been living on St. Thomas. Because the demand for male slaves was great, Vesey managed to sell the teenager to a French planter for what the captain considered a high price. The deal soon turned sour; three months later, the youth became seriously ill, prompting the irate planter to demand that Vesey refund his money. A physician verified the planter’s claim that he was not in perfectly good health-he was epileptic, by law Vesey had to buy back his slave.⁸

This “buy back”⁹ would be the beginning of Vesey’s development in piecing together his taste for nonconformity.

When there is an anchor tied to our ankle in the sea of life, God provides either a life vest or a lifeboat. The vest represents the temporary need to keep us afloat while

80. 7. Erskine, *Plantation Church How African American Religion Was Born in Caribbean Slavery*,

8. Edwards, *Denmark Vesey*, 24-25.

9. Edwards, *Denmark Vesey*, 24-25.

overcoming the turbulent events of life. This could be in the form of someone coming into your life at the right time and place for a short amount of time. The lifeboat is a long-term support that metaphorically gets you to safety and dryland which may equate to getting out of an abusive relationship, overcoming the death of a loved one, etc. Vesey was in receipt of a lifeboat that was camouflaged as an illness which forced his return to his captain that would allow him to see the first-hand effects of human trafficking in the Caribbean and along the African Coast. Edwards further writes,

After his return to the captain, Denmark immediately became the captain's personal slave and began sailing with him throughout the Caribbean and along the African Coast. Denmark spent little time studying the beauty of the West African coastline. He could not stop himself from staring at a large thatched enclosure on the beach. It was a makeshift stockade filled with Africans. Some were bound by ropes, others by chains. Along with the young men who had their feet and hands locked in heavy shackles were women, some of them nursing babies, and children with tear stained cheeks.¹⁰

Vesey was forced to watch fellow humans, who were at one time kings and queens, doctors, preachers, philosophers, lawyers, etc.; now being treated as human freight. He witnessed people of color being bartered for rum, guns, sugar, cloth, iron, glass beads, paper, pots, and fishhooks. He was one man on a journey staring into the eyes and souls of those before him, shackled; and their eyes burning with anger, sadness, humiliation and despair. Would Vesey become their lifeboat? Where was the church and its refuge? Where was the promised land?

Black churchgoers of this time period were under the bitter supervision of white clergy who were not always sympathetic to the plight of the slave or free person of color. The white community besieged black churchgoers with the same institutional restrictions

10. Edwards, *Denmark Vesey*, 24-25.

that were placed on slaves; as well as freed slaves due to the fear that education would lead to massive revolts and the assumption of equality. It was not uncommon for the white churches to teach a false doctrine of the Bible to maintain the oppression of the slaves. Noel L. Erskine further writes, “Another approach was to teach a false eschatology from the Bible that this world was a vale of tears and although life was hard for enslaved people, if they obeyed their masters and worked faithfully to please them, they would inherit heaven beyond the sky when they died.”¹¹ One could surmise that as deliberate as segregation was practiced on the plantation; the same ethos of segregation would also be assumed to be taught in bible study about segregation in heaven by the white Christian church.

The Baptists, Methodists, and Presbyterians expressed opposition to the brutality, buying and selling of slaves, as well as the practice of segregation because it was contrary to God’s laws and an atrocity to mankind if blacks were not free to worship.

Charleston had a law on the books against slaves or free blacks congregating for religious purposes without a white person present. Any black person who attended such gatherings ran the risk of receiving twenty-lashes with a whip. It was not uncommon for blacks to worship secretly, in which most of their services were held at night.¹²

The fear that blacks would become educated was compounded with the fear of black independent thinking, followed by rebellious activities and finally independence. The rebellious act of blacks praying at a white church came to a head when Absalom Jones and Richard Allen (who later become AME preachers) were forcefully removed from a

11. Erskine, *Plantation Church How African American Religion Was Born in Caribbean Slavery*, 80.

12. Edwards, *Denmark Vesey*, 49.

white church when they went to the altar to pray. The actions of this struggle would give birth to the AMEC and Richard Allen would later be elected the first bishop of the AMEC in 1816, with a focus on organizing a denomination where free blacks could worship without racial oppression and slaves could find a measure of dignity. He worked to upgrade the social status of the black community, organizing Sabbath schools to mentor men such as Vesey in literacy, leadership and promoting national organizations to develop political and leadership strategies, which was seen as a crime. Paul Harvey, author of *Through the Storm, through the Night: A History of African American Christianity* wrote, “the great crime committed by the AME founders was that they dared to organize a Church of men, men to think for themselves, men to talk for themselves, men to act for themselves...men who prefer to live by the sweat of their own brow and be free.”¹³ Black leadership and mentoring has not been based on how much one knew or even who they knew, rather it was the mentoring itself that made them passionate about their role. The ability to influence and address matters of internal and external risk requires leaders who are willing to accept the consequences and limited praise for their efforts. John Lofton, author of *The Slave Revolt that Lit a Fuse to Fort Sumter: Denmark Vesey’s Revolt* writes,

Religious instruction of the Negro in South Carolina during the late eighteenth century and the early part of the nineteenth was carried on principally by four denominations: The Baptist, the Methodist, the Presbyterians and the Episcopalians. Well before the Revolutionary War, the Anglican Church’s Society for the Propagation of the Gospel in Foreign parts had established a school for Negroes in Charleston. This activity was, until the close of the war, the most effective effort to reach the colored population. The Baptist, Methodist, and

¹³ Paul Harvey, *Through the Storm, through the Night: A History of African American Christianity* (Lanham, MD: Rowman & Littlefield Published, 2013), 40.

Presbyterian gained in strength because of the revision of that which had given the Episcopal Church (formerly the Church of England) a favored status.¹⁴

Integrity embodies the uprightness of Vesey, Allen, Jones, and all of the AMEC founders who exhibited a clear conscience, purity, honesty, blamelessness, soundness of character and adherence to moral principles. Integrity is the integration of the core values in an individual who stands proudly in keeping promises, choosing to be accountable and taking on the promise to always be faithful. Simply put, integrity was and is doing what is right regardless of who is or is not watching. Integrity is the ability to hold together and properly regulate all the elements of one's personality with conviction and control impulses and selfish appetites of prosperity while covering the moral traits which are indispensable to service. J. O. Amaniampong argues,

The supreme quality of a leader is his integrity. Without it, no real success is possible; whether on a court, a football field, in the army, in the Church or in an office. Integrity is more important in the Christian ministry than in any other job. If a minister's congregation finds him/her guilty of insincerity; if they find out that he lacks integrity, he/she will fail. His/her teachings and actions must agree with each other.¹⁵

The apostle Paul wrote, "All Scripture is God-breathed and is useful for teaching, rebuking, correcting and training in righteousness, so that the man of God may be thoroughly equipped for every good work" (2 Tim, 3:16). The bible eludes to the foundation that integrity has greater relevance to life according to who is reading the Scripture and at what stage of life the person's level of integrity is maturing; coupled with their experiences which is preserved for the instruction of future generations and

14. John Lofton, *Denmark Vesey's Revolt: the Slave Plot That Lit a Fuse to Fort Sumter* (Kent, OH: The Kent State University Press, 2013), 51.

15. J. O. Amaniampong, *Ministerial Integrity, Leadership Series*
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=a5Gm2peHhbI>. Published on May 7, 2017.

positions of leadership. Eugene Peterson, author of *Working the Angles: the Shape of Pastoral Integrity* reminds pastors that,

The power, longevity, and effectiveness of a church lie in large part on the leadership of its pastor. It should not be about his or her administrative skills, but it should be about the spiritual life and leadership of the pastor. This is not about perfection. It's about a relationship with God. This teaches a pastor to renew his/her call to ministry, to give permission and encouragement in keeping the promises of ordination and installation with integrity.¹⁶

How does this tie back to Vesey and the church? Vesey reportedly conducted bible study, preached liberation in his home, mentored his officers in the roles of leadership through the teaching of Scripture and the *Theology of Liberation*, as recorded by the Public Broadcasting system,

His chief lieutenant was an East African priest named Gullah Jack, who led conspirators in prayer and rituals and gave them amulets to protect them in battle. Vesey's theology of liberation, combined with Gullah Jack's African mysticism, inspired potential participants, and word of the rebellion grew.¹⁷

Vesey abandoned thinking as a slave long before he planned the proposed Charleston revolt—he had purchased his own freedom and his motives were not self-serving. He helped found Emanuel AMEC in 1816, the oldest African Methodist Episcopal church in the Southern United States, where he reportedly planned the uprising for July 14, 1822, Bastille Day. His plan was to capture Charleston's arsenals and guard houses; kill the Governor and white slave owners while they slept; set fire to the city; and kill every white man they saw. In early June 1822, some fearful slaves leaked the plans of the rebellion to their owners and Vesey was subsequently arrested before the plot could be

16. Eugene H. Peterson, *Working the angles: the shape of pastoral integrity* (Grand Rapids, MI: W.B. Eerdmans 1987), 150.

17. Public Broadcasting System http://www.pbs.org/thisfarbyfaith/people/denmark_vesey.html. (accessed April 29, 2018).

carried out. Although he would later deny it, Vesey allegedly held meetings at his home to collect arms for an uprising he was planning for as many as 9000 African Americans in South Carolina. John Lofton writes,

The largest slave uprising in the United States was planned for July 14, 1822, by Denmark Vesey. It was over before it was started due to a leak. 9000 slaves were involved, 131 were arrested, then either deported or hanged in this massive scheme in which the Governor and the mayor were to be killed, the city arsenal broke into, anyone out at night were to be murdered, fires to be set throughout the city and all the slaves would sail off to Haiti on the ships in the Charleston Harbor. All this was planned by Denmark Vesey in the AME Church in Charleston, S.C.¹⁸

The official report of the courtroom episode, as quoted by Wentworth T. Higginson states, "Vesey's pride and the strength of his convictions. He was not idle; for if his companion bowed to a white person, he was known to rebuke him, and observe that all men were born equal."¹⁹ At the trial, the sentencing judge was astonished by the heroism displayed by Vesey throughout his ordeal. Higginson quoted the judge addressing Vesey: "It is difficult to imagine what infatuation could have prompted you to attempt an enterprise so wild and visionary. You were a free man, comely, wealthy, and enjoyed every comfort compatible with your situation. You had, therefore, much to risk and little to gain."²⁰ Vesey defended himself at his trial but was sentenced and hanged along with approximately thirty-five reported black conspirators, while others who were involved were sold to West Indian plantation owners.

18. Lofton, *Denmark Vesey's Revolt*, 99.

19. Wentworth Thomas Higginson, *Denmark Vesey, Forgotten Hero*.
<https://www.theatlantic.com/magazine/archive/1999/12/denmark-vesey-forgotten-hero/305673/> (date accessed 2 May 2018).

20. Higginson, (date accessed 2 May 2018).

Emanuel AMEC, which Vesey attended, was investigated, found liable and the building was subsequently burned down. The bias court and plantation owners viewed the Vesey rebellion as a possible catastrophic slave revolt, which needed to be checked by passing stricter laws against African Americans. This was accomplished prior to the Civil War. The Public Broadcasting System records indicate,

In the aftermath of the Vesey rebellion, the African Church was burned down, and authorities passed a series of laws further restricting the rights of Charleston slaves. Vesey became a martyr for African Americans and a symbol for the abolitionist movement, while the increasingly militant politics of white America dragged the country toward Civil War.²¹

Putting one's faith into action, through care of the poor and needy is a leadership trait best found in the book of James, “But whoever looks intently into the perfect law that gives freedom and continues in it—not forgetting what they have heard but doing it—they will be blessed in what they do” (Jas 1:25). Vesey operated in a nontraditional and nonconforming manner by removing the distorted view of the law of liberty, and self. He viewed those around him as people, not objects whose needs he placed above himself. Vesey reminds us to be doers who act and investigate the perfect law, the law of liberty, and persevere being not hearers who forget, but doers who act--they will be blessed in their doing. The book of James puts forth the following question,

What good is it, my brothers and sisters, if someone claims to have faith but has no deeds? Can such faith save them? Suppose a brother or a sister is without clothes and daily food. If one of you says to them, go in peace; keep warm and well fed, but does nothing about their physical needs, what good is it? In the same way, faith by itself, if it is not accompanied by action, is dead (Jas 2:14-17).

21. Public Broadcasting System http://www.pbs.org/thisfarbyfaith/people/denmark_vesey.html. (accessed April 29, 2018).

The book of James reminds the reader that our faith and good works which we feel and do is internalized and not always projected outwardly in good faith; if the works and deeds we perform is not based in the love and grace of God, then all works and deeds are dead.

Vesey was a man inculcated with the Spirit of God; not with super-human strength or noble heritage, but blessed with the faith of Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego, three Hebrew men thrown into a fiery furnace by Nebuchadnezzar, King of Babylon. When they refuse to bow down to the king's image, the three were saved from harm and the king witnesses four men walking in the flames safe through the blessing of God. When we use the term blessed by God, we are referring to being favored by God and He has demonstrated His commitment to see us delivered from the curse of sin into the blessings He has in mind for us.

When the burden of leadership was becoming too heavy on Moses' life, he cried out to God. His response was to get Moses to gather together seventy men of the Elders of Israel. The Lord said to Moses:

Bring me seventy of Israel's elders who are known to you as leaders and officials among the people. Have them come to the tent of meeting that they may stand there with you. I will come down and speak with you there, and I will take some of the power of the Spirit that is on you and put it on them. They will share the burden of the people with you so that you will not have to carry it alone (Num 11:16 – 17).

God imparted His Spirit through Moses to the Elders and they began to prophesy. This was something they had never done before which enabled them to take on greater responsibilities to support Moses' petition to minister to the people and to bless others in a more powerful way through the reading and hearing of the preached word. This act has been known to rise-up the oppressed and forge a change. Bishop Francis Asbury writes,

In 1788 Bishop Francis Asbury told in his journal of how, while a colleague was preaching at a church in Charleston, a riot was started at the door, the congregation became alarmed and ladies leaped out at the windows of the church, and a dreadful confusion ensued. That night while Asbury was speaking, the church was stoned. In 1794 Asbury reported another riot at a Charleston Church in which windows were broken and the doors beat open. In 1796 the Methodist church prohibited the ownership of slaves by the church officials and forbade any Methodist to buy or sell slaves ‘unjustly, inhumanly or covetously.’ By 1808 the church suffered a relapse and repealed all rules which attempted to regulate a private member’s dealings with slavery.²²

There is no shortage of examples of how to be an effective mentor or articles on how to navigate through most situations; while working to improve every idea either by studying the traits of the leaders of yesterday and today. The principles from renowned leaders as Martin Luther King, Jr., Malcolm X, Reverend Al Sharpton, Medgar Evers and former President Barack Obama are just a small representation of proven effective leaders who have engaged in difficult conversations, and challenging situations that impede progress while being a transformational leader.

The twenty-first century revolutions continue along with the betrayals, arrest, and killings within and around our *Beloved Communities*. The black church is more than a religious movement; it was and continues to be the birthplace of new leaders like Senators Kamala Harris, Corey Booker, Rev Dr. C. Anthony Hunt, Dr. Lisa Hess and Bishop Harry L. Seawright. These are examples of change-agents and non-conformists.

The black church is the nexus for healing for all people. More so because the black church was birthed out of oppression and segregation, a place for wanderers to find rest, a home and God. It was a place where our ancestors met to celebrate life and the transition of loved ones. It is the place where the God of our forefathers and mothers

22. Lofton, *Denmark Vesey’s Revolt*, 61.

healed our wounds and saved us from our transgressions while giving us leaders who remind the community that different does not mean deficient.

Conclusion

There is an interconnectedness and interdependence in leadership ordained by God that exemplifies the production of Spirit led leadership, empowerment of followers to lead, and promote effective mentoring. Using Jesus as the example, leaders must also serve as mentors for followers. History benchmarks Vesey's story as a one-time slave who would later mentor leaders who seized the opportunity to utilize their talents and promote a rich teaming environment.

In each of these areas, God operated as needed through His followers, and the body of Christ laid the historical cornerstone for mentoring development models in the church and surrounding communities. Slavery, social injustice and the duplicity of the law is still fresh in the minds, hearts and souls of the global society; and unjust acts are still being portrayed in the twenty-first century. Slavery was not a choice, but an international disgrace that cuts into the very fabric of a contested sin that is still being fought. Spiritual leadership is directed at uprooting a people and changing the hearts, minds and souls of all people. A trait a Christian leader brings to others is to glorify God by being a person who loves both friend and foe, according to the book of Matthew,

You are the light of the world. A city set on a hill cannot be hidden. Nor do people light a lamp and put it under a basket, but on a stand, and it gives light to all in the house. In the same way, let your light shine before others, so that they may see your good works and give glory to your Father who is in heaven (Matt. 5:14–16).

The goal of the mentor should be the development of leaders of today and tomorrow, preparing them with the tenacity of a lion, a humble servant heart and a nonconformist spirit.

CHAPTER FOUR

THEOLOGICAL FOUNDATIONS

Introduction

Chapter three took the reader on a journey in understanding that all leaders possess identifiable characteristics that set them apart from their peers because they have been forged in a continuous developmental process shaped outside of their comfort zone.

The theological foundation of this project is built upon MLK's *Beloved Community* and the mentoring developmental processes needed by pastors planting a new work and provisioning them with the essential elements of leadership and knowledge using Elijah and Elisha as an example in the book of Kings. Leadership development through mentoring is the focus of this research, without intentional development of leaders through mentoring, this particular ministry runs the risk of losing its effectiveness. There must be a theological business strategy used in placing mentors with mission pastors after they leave the AME Board of Examiners and seminary; thereby ensuring a successful transition into the call of planting a new church, prayerfully avoiding the possibility of failure. In the book entitled, *7 Practices of Effective Ministry*, authored by Andy Stanley, Reggie Joiner and Lane Jones approach the reality of ministry stating,

If you fail to develop a strategy to replace yourself, you will...
...force talented individuals to remain in the wings.
...cause potential leaders to exit the organization.

...stifle needed insight from valuable team members.
 ...hinder your ability to recruit volunteers.
 ...limit the growth of your programs and ministries.¹

To reiterate, the goal of this project is to mentor mission pastors in becoming better prepared in managing the requirements associated with planting a new church. The current process of planting a church and preparing pastors must be redesigned, reengineered with codified processes that are routinely reexamined ensuring that the church is continuously developing new leaders for their calling and assisting them in embracing their roles in fresh methodologies; not being devoid of the Word and obligations in the development of pastors as written in the book of 1 Thessalonians 2:6-10,

We were not looking for praise from people, not from you or anyone else, even though as apostles of Christ we could have asserted our authority. Instead, we were like young children among you. Just as a nursing mother cares for her children, so we cared for you. Because we loved you so much, we were delighted to share with you not only the gospel of God but our lives as well. Surely you remember, brothers and sisters, our toil and hardship; we worked night and day in order not to be a burden to anyone while we preached the gospel of God to you (1 Thess 2:6-10).

The contemporary research of Old Testament scholars such as Renita Weems, Benjamin E. Mays, as well as New Testament scholars Brad Braxton and Obery Hendricks Jr., continues to build upon Martin Luther King, Jr.'s, *Beloved Community*. In conjunction with the works of Bishop. William J. Barber II, Greenleaf Christian Church, Goldsboro, North Carolina, Reverend Liz Theoharis, Kairos Center at Union Theological Seminary, in New York, Rev Dr. C. Anthony Hunt, Epworth United Methodist Church, Baltimore, MD, Rev Dr. Cain Hope Felder, New Testament biblical scholar who have directly

1. Andy Stanley, Reggie Joiner and Lane Jones, *7 Practices of Effective Ministry* (Colorado Springs, CO: Multnomah Books, 2004), 160.

addressed the challenges relative to how the Bible is read, preached interpreted, specifically given the issues of race relations facing the Black church today and going forward. The foundational responsibilities and scholarship of the African American pastor in the black church requires more than classroom instruction in leadership and managerial principles in maintaining church balance.

The scholarship of black biblical interpreters have, according to Vincent Wimbush, “served as a challenge to the largely unacknowledged interested, invested, racialized, culture-specific, and ethnic-specific practice of Eurocentric biblical interpretation that is part of an even larger pattern of such interpretation of literatures and of history in the West.”² The twenty-first century pastor must portray a balanced image of humility, biblical scholarship and that of an unwavering leader not intimidated by the church membership or live in fear of making an unfavorable Spiritual decision. The book of Ephesians teaches, “Equip the saints for the work of ministry” (Eph 4:12). The emerging black church must be a successor to the visions of our forefathers and mothers; cultivating resources resulting from sound stewardship with pastors steeped in the history, culture, and faith of their people. The black church should have a prophetic witness, equipped with tested leadership and business administration principles which can and will emancipate all people.

Preparation through mentorship is the key to not only making better churches, but better leaders whose ideas and concepts in ministry are formulated outside of traditional thinking, which ultimately may lead to serving others with great enthusiasm and embrace

2. Vincent L. Wimbush, ed., *African Americans and the Bible: Sacred Texts and Social Textures* (New York, NY: Continuum, 2001). A comprehensive anthology addressing issues in African American biblical interpretation. 8.

the creative ideas of others. In the words of the late Benjamin E. Mays who served as president of Morehouse College,

It must be born in mind that the tragedy of life does not lie in not reaching your goal. The tragedy lies in having no goal to reach. It isn't a calamity to die with dreams unfulfilled, but it is a calamity not to dream. It is not a disaster to be unable to capture your idea, but it is a disaster to have no idea to capture. It is not a disgrace to have no stars to reach for. Not failure, but low aim, is sin.³

It is often said that there is power in preaching the word of God which comes natural to the preacher. 1 Corinthians reflects on the words of Paul concerning the natural person and preaching, “The *natural* person does not accept the things of the Spirit of God, for they are folly to him, and he is not able to understand them because they are spiritually discerned” (1Cor 2:14).

Preaching aims specifically at bringing about the spiritual insight of the glories and wonders of God in Christ. The late Reverend Dr. Cain Hope Felder articulated the power of preaching saying, “It’s an oxymoron to say preaching with power, I don’t know if we can call it preaching without power. It’s not preaching. if you speak the word of God, it emphasizes there is power. There is authority in the text.”⁴ The preacher is the change agent speaking the miracle works of God which originated by the Holy Spirit and formed by the character of the Holy Spirit which is revealed in Scripture. Preaching, put into its proper context is spiritual worship looking to awaken spiritual worship in the worshipers. Without God’s providence the preacher would not have life or breath or

3. Benjamin Mays and Joseph William Nicholson, *The Negro Church* (New York, NY: Arnold Press, 1933), 50.

4. Arlene Edmonds. "Rev. Cain Hope Felder Visits Mount Airy." The Philadelphia Tribune. March 28, 2014. Accessed March 12, 2019. https://www.phillytrib.com/lifestyles/religion/rev-cain-hope-felder-visits-mount-airy/article_7d086922-ccd8-5cd3-b370-e2ae842ce68f.html.

anything. The book of Acts reminds the preacher that, “nor is he served by human hands, as though he needed anything, since he himself gives to all mankind life and breath and everything (Acts 17:25).

The time has come for the church leadership to be more vocal and action oriented. Peaceful protesters have become easy targets of opportunity; and questionable police beatings and shootings are the norm and not the exception in communities across all nations. Now is the time for the church leadership, regardless of denomination, assert themselves and speak with a clear, prophetic voice. In July of 2016, The Rev. C. Anthony Hunt, stated,

The time has come for religious leaders (from all denominations and religions persuasions – from the left, right and middle) and espoused community activists/leaders and politicians everywhere in the nation to speak with clear prophetic voices about the nation’s divine imperative, moral prerogative and plan to move above and beyond the moral muck and mire in which we now find ourselves.⁵

Planting a New Church

God’s grace and deliverance has always empowered the African American church and helped to form a powerful theological and historical framework of our oppressed ancestors who would in the words of Reverend Fleder, “often translate central plots and themes from biblical stories into songs relating to their own struggles.”⁶ The Apostle Peter was directed by Jesus to strengthen his brethren and to feed His sheep as read from

5. News and Views." Baltimore-Washington Conference UMC. Accessed March 12, 2019. <https://www.bwcumc.org/news-and-views/clear-prophetic-voices-now-needed/>.

6. Cain Hope Felder, *Troubling Biblical Waters: Race, Class, and Family* (Maryknoll, NY: Orbis Books, 1994), 85–86.

the book of Luke, “but I have prayed for you that your own faith may not fail; and you, when once you have turned back, strengthen your brothers” (Lk 22:32). What did Jesus mean by the phrase, “strengthen your brethren” (Lk 22:32)? To be strengthen or converted means to be changed from one form to another; a weaken state to a stronger state or from hunger to satisfied. When the Lord changes our hearts, we end up more powerful than when He started with us. When Peter was directed by Jesus to strengthen his brethren, Peter was coming from a Christ-like place in which he could now make better decisions in his and others lives. He now had more Christ-like strength and ability to be a positive influence in the world and the Lord expects us to do the same; strengthen others through strengthening and feeding others. Additionally, the book of John reiterated several times the action to feed (to provide substance) and tend the flock for he states,

When they had finished breakfast, Jesus said to Simon Peter, Simon son of John, do you love me more than these? He said to him, Yes, Lord; you know that I love you. Jesus said to him, Feed my lambs. A second time he said to him, Simon son of John, do you love me? He said to him, Yes, Lord; you know that I love you. Jesus said to him, Tend my sheep. He said to him the third time, “Simon son of John, do you love me? Peter felt hurt because he said to him the third time, do you love me? And he said to him, “Lord, you know everything; you know that I love you. Jesus said to him, Feed my sheep (Jn 21:15-17).

The Apostles Paul and Barnabas were sent out to strengthen and to plant churches with the leaders of the church of Antioch as read in the book of Acts,

Now in the church at Antioch there were prophets and teachers: Barnabas, Simeon who was called Niger, Lucius of Cyrene, Manaen a member of the court of Herod the ruler, and Saul. While they were worshiping the Lord and fasting, the Holy Spirit said, set apart for me Barnabas and Saul for the work to which I have called them (Acts 13:1-2).

Paul did not attempt to plant a church alone but had a team that included seasoned leaders such as Barnabas, Silas, John Mark, Timothy, Luke and others that supplied him with a competent planting team.

The leadership of FLAME has been in contact with the Presiding Elder of the Washington Capital District in providing mentorship through the implementation of this project and using a predesigned survey to determine what challenges pastors have and are facing; in addition to using Scripture and the AMEC Discipline as reference points for the leadership development of pastors to meet the minimum requirements for a pastor's appointment. Additionally, for the purposes of this project, the counsel of the following servant leaders was sought: Bishop Harry Seawright, (Ninth Episcopal District Prelate and author of *More than Bricks and Mortar; Building a church Without Losing Your Mind*) Dr. C. A. Hunt (*Blessed Are the Peacemakers: Theological Thoughts of Howard Thurman and Martin Luther King, Jr*), Dr. L. Hess (*Artisanal Theology: Intentional Formation in Radically Covenantal Companionship*) and Presiding Elder Louis-Charles Harvey (*The Pastor's Manual For the 21st Century*). Elder Harvey writes states,

Before a local church begins an ambitious evangelistic program to win the unsaved and the unchurched to Christ Jesus, it must ready itself to receive, teach and nurture new joiners in Christ. As one preheats an oven before baking a cake, so must a local church prepare itself to reach and minister to newcomers in the 'faith'. The pastor and church must examine themselves according to God's 'word, fire and love' as to whether or not they are filled with all the elements of a real evangelistic spirit.⁷

The current guidance for officially planting a new church within the AMEC is written in the *book of Discipline of the African Methodist Episcopal Church* dating back to May 1817 (revised in 2016). Section IV of the AMEC Discipline states,

The organization of a new congregation must first have the approval of the presiding bishop of the episcopal district in which the proposed new church is to be located. The approval shall be given in writing, but only in response to a written request for the formation of the proposed new church.⁸

7. George L. Champion, Charles Harvey and D. W. Jacobs, *The Pastors Manual for the 21st Century* (Nashville, TN: The AME Sunday School Union, 2000/2002), 234.

8. The Doctrine and Discipline of the African Methodist Episcopal Church 2004-2008 (Nashville, TN: AMEC Sunday School Union, 2005).

Dr. C. Anthony Hunt and E. Franklin Frazier, Professor of African American Studies, through their writings implore the readers to understand that leadership is an essential element in religious studies. The focus on the historical applications of leadership, as it relates to religious education settings, allows the reader to gain an insight and an appreciation of leadership dynamics within the context of leadership styles, methods, and structures in the twenty-first century educational and religious settings.

It is leadership's responsibility to understand the historical and the cross-cultural concepts and process of requesting to plant a new work and essentially becoming aware that once the incarnation of planting a church unveils itself; it also becomes a labor of love and requires a great amount of research, mentoring and prayer on the part of the pastor elect, who normally has little experience in planting a church. *The Pastor's*

Manual informs the reader that if,

There are no open churches. If you would like to pastor in the AMEC, start one. More importantly, this calls for a Church planting training program which consists of workshops, seminars and where possible, practical on-the-job training. The training should take place throughout the Episcopal Districts on Annual Conference and District levels.⁹

To date, there is no specialized preparation or mentoring program designed for those who are seeking to plant and grow a new work as an AMEC Pastor, except for the limited training provided by the AMEC Board of Examiners, which attempts to identify persons who possess the qualities and spiritual gifts to enable the church planter in starting and shaping the identity of new African American churches. Michael J. Gorman, Author of, *Scripture and Its Interpretation: A Global, Ecumenical Introduction to the Bible* provides

9. Champion, *Pastor's Manual*, 295.

an outline of the three basic features which have historically shaped the identity of African American churches.

The three basic features which have historically shaped the identity of African American churches. First, African American churches were birthed out of the reality of slavery. Second, the life and character of African American churches, while linked in some respects to the Christianity of the churches of white Americans, are organically and inherently derived from the experiences of African traditional religions. The third common feature in shaping the African American churches has been the central role of the Bible.¹⁰

The implementation of a well-developed training manual, funding and a carefully guided mentoring program designed to assist pastors is the key to the success and longevity of the new church, its members and the connectional. Conceptually, every pastor should have a pastor, a mentor or confidant (not necessarily one in ministry), a coach, and a therapist (on-call). All five are needed, and they all serve different and significant purposes in the pastor's life.

Theological Foundation of Mission Church Planting

A mission church is normally not self-sustaining and should depend partially upon the support of mission funds and grants from the larger religious organization that established it. The methodologies that must be use going forward to prepare pastors for planting churches includes but is not limited to practical leadership training for the development and success of a pastor and substantiated training under a team of mentors for at least two years. Brandon B. Porter, author of *Filling God's House: Practical*

10. Michael J. Gorman, *Scripture and Its Interpretation: A Global, Ecumenical Introduction to the Bible* (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Academic, a Division of Baker Publishing Group, 2017), 1-19.

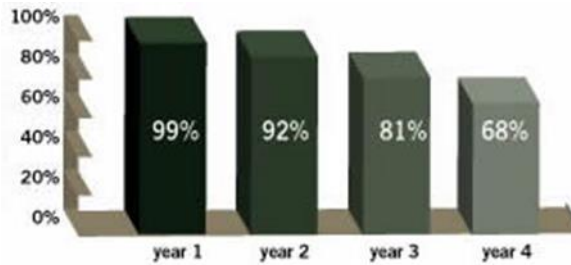
Church Growth Principals for the 21st Century writes, “Leadership development for the pastor and for those around then are very important to the growth and continued strength of the church.”¹¹ When engaging in leadership development, the mentor cannot neglect his/or her own continuous growth; while simultaneously mentoring those who will thrive under the mentoring program as much as the mentor’s ability allows. If the mentor cannot or fails to provide continuous growth, the cycle will ultimately become stagnated. This can prove to be detrimental when leadership quality drops, as well as the effectiveness of ministry. History reminds us that it takes a quality leader (with integrity) to bring out the leadership qualities in others and ultimately sets the foundation for the new pastor performance plan.

There is a general belief that church plants should be self-sufficient within the first, two-three years to have any type of longevity. In a research project commissioned by Leadership Network, The North American Mission Board (NAMB) reviewed studies on church plant health, survivability, and processes to discover what sustains church plants from twelve denominations and networks which were included in the study. “Leadership Network participated in this study of more than 1,000 churches. From this study NAMB discovered that sixty-eight percent of church plants still exist four years after denominations had started them. The graph displays the survivability by incremental years.”¹²

11. Brandon B. Porter, *Filling God’s House: Practical Church Growth Principals for the 21st Century* (Memphis, TN: GTC Productions, 2012), 39.

12. "Enrichment Journal - Enriching and Equipping Spirit-filled Ministers." Equipping Church Planters for Success. Accessed March 16, 2019.
http://enrichmentjournal.ag.org/200904/200904_036_equipping.cfm.

Graph: *Sixty-eight percent of New Churches Still Going after 4 Years*



The common denominator in the success of a church plant is the church planter(s) and mentor(s) relationship. Survivability is significantly higher when the church planter engages and draws upon the support systems provided by the mother denomination and/or associated networks. Jesus drew unto Him a diverse group of disciples that he molded into a community centered on His kingship. These disciples were the nucleus of the church and church planting. As such, we must focus on the church if it is to grow and prosper. The book of Ephesians teaches, “so that through the church the wisdom of God in its rich variety might now be made known to the rulers and authorities in the heavenly places” (Eph 3:10). The church being central to God’s redemptive purpose, we should passionately desire to know how to make it more effective in her mission.

Due to the ever-changing methodologies in planting a church, a strong theological education must also be supplemented with a process of mentoring a pastor. This mentoring process should also incorporate business perspectives preparing the pastor(s) with sound programs, reinforced with spiritual educational content. The developmental stages for new pastors to become effective leaders in church planting must possess a high-degree of competence, confidence, character, commitment, integrity and judgement, which will ultimately lay the foundation for the type of leader that will be used for the growth of the missions church. David Hansen and D. L. Goetz, authors of *The Power of*

Loving your Church: Leading through Acceptance and Grace, Vol. 1 of The Pastor's Soul Series, wrote, "Pastoral work has fundamentally changed. Today it's harder, more complex, and more intense than it was in generations past. The church needs to be reengineered to become a cultural force; pastors must look to new paradigms for their calling and see their role in fresh ways."¹³ The development process for a leader is paramount to the success of church planting which can be characterized as being birthed in the missiology of church planting and growth.

Donald McGavran, author of *Understanding Church Growth*, was a missionary in India and his mission principles are built on the missiology of Waskom Pickett (Methodist minister and missionary to India) and Roland Allen (English missionary to China). McGavran summarized the foundational concepts of church growth in the language of mission:

Church growth... delves into how persons and people become genuinely Christian and revolutionize and bless the cultures and populations in the midst of which God has placed them. Church growth arises in theology and biblical faithfulness. It draws heavily on the social sciences because it always occurs in societies. It continually seeks for instances in which God has granted growth and then asks what are the real factors he has blessed to such increase.¹⁴

The book of Genesis (3:1-7) informs the readers that humans were corrupted by sin when Adam and Eve fell from grace in the Garden of Eden. The missiology method views this from another lens, "A missiological method takes into consideration the thought process of the unbeliever in order to bring their content into dialogue with Scripture. The goal for

13. David Hansen and D. L. Goetz, *The Power of Loving your Church: Leading through Acceptance and Grace, Vol. 1 of The Pastor's Soul Series* (Minneapolis, MN: Bethany House, 1998), 15.

14. Donald A. McGavran, and C. Peter. Wagner. *Understanding Church Growth*. (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 1970), reprinted 3rd ed., revised and ed. by C. Peter Wagner, 1991, xiv.

the believer is to show the insufficiency of the unbelievers' worldview by juxtaposing it with a biblical worldview."¹⁵ Could missiology methods coexist with Enlightenment thinking, which stressed reason, logic and freedom of thought over blind faith?

Enlightenment presents a direct challenge to religious standards and views. Ernst Troeltsch, a German Protestant theologian, believed that the European church at the beginning of Twentieth Century was crossing the threshold of Enlightenment, for he writes, "The emergence of the nation state, he worried about the present condition and prospects of western civilization. Troeltsch lived to see his fears confirmed in the carnage of trench warfare and Germany's attempts to establish a political settlement in the form of the Weimar Republic following World War One (1914-1918)."¹⁶

The model of church planting is based on the work of Jesus Christ. Pointing to His strategy and ability to build in undesirable and un-ministered areas, it is our goal to create communities in new places through a new work with an enlightenment and missiology that embracing the importance of reaching out to those of little faith. The book of Matthew speaks to the issue of little faith and doubt,

"He said, come. So, Peter got out of the boat, started walking on the water, and came towards Jesus. But when he noticed the strong wind, he became frightened, and beginning to sink, he cried out, Lord, save me! Jesus immediately reached out his hand and caught him, saying to him, you of little faith, why did you doubt? (Matt 14:29-31

15 Defining a Missiological Method." Send Institute. June 11, 2018. Accessed January 25, 2019. <https://www.sendinstitute.org/the-need-for-a-missiological-method/>.

16. "Ernst Troeltsch (1865-1923)." Brief History of Computer. Accessed January 25, 2019. <http://people.bu.edu/wwildman/bce/troeltsch.htm>.

Theological Theme in Leadership Development

Developing and shaping church leaders with a spirit-filled life is essential in fulfilling God's purposes, but the realization of leading a church is a far more difficult task when developing leaders to sustain and establish a new church. The mentors and leaders of the church need to ensure that the church planting process does not lay dormant on the community's doorstep, but that it resonates the logos (written word of God, recorded in the Bible) and the Rhema (the utterance) of God for His new church. The work of ministry, regardless of the phase, requires structured leadership and the art of delegation, if it is to be effective.

Assessing the historical voices of theologians such as, Saint Thomas Aquinas, Renita Weems, James H. Cones, Valerie Bridgeman, Cain Hope Felder, and Samuel Dewitt Proctor; who all universally brought their words of wisdom to life along with the correlation and coordination needed for leadership implementation and pastoral success. The formulation of sound Black Theology, along with continuously evaluated leadership practices, will prepare an individual for success in ministry and assist the church in achieving attainable milestones.

Kent R. Hunter, author of *Move Your Church to Action*, writes, "The pastor must learn to delegate responsibilities to others, not as a method of avoiding work, but to increase the effective impact of the congregation."¹⁷ The effectiveness of the church is contingent upon the pastor's willingness to pass the baton, nurture and grow other leaders as well as themselves. This intentional mentoring development in ministry allows for increased ministry effectiveness through the ability to offer more ministerial outreach to

17. Kent R. Hunter, *Move Your Church to Action* (Nashville, TN: Abingdon Press, 2000), 112.

better meet the needs of her members and the community. Too often the leadership of the black church finds itself being critiqued about its true blackness. Cone wrestled throughout his life and developed the case for Black Liberation Theology. Rufus Burrow, Jr., author of *Father of Contemporary Black Theology*, states,

His earlier criticisms of the church by pastors, many of whom have not spent adequate time grappling with Cone's real message: namely, that the black church has gotten away from its historical linkage with a more prophetic black church. It places too little emphasis on setting the captives free, and too much on celebrating pastors' anniversaries and raising funds to build expensive church buildings.¹⁸

Saint Thomas Aquinas, author of *Summa Theology*, (relationship between God and man) wrote, “the purpose of mission is to so thoroughly root the church in the various cultures and societies that it serves as an instrument to salvation and good.”¹⁹ Aquinas moves the reader to understand that *Summa Theologica* can be expressed and codified comprehensively while “examining the relationship between God and man and how man’s reconciliation with the Divine is made possible at all through Christ.”²⁰ Deliberate leadership development in *Summa Theologica* ministry allows for increased effectiveness using missiology; and it offers diverse ministerial outreach to meet the needs of its members, the community and subsequently moving toward incarnation of the Holy Spirit.

This could change the paradigms in church planting, community involvement and leadership development. Leadership development and mentoring must be an ongoing

18. Rufus Burrow, Jr., (1993) "*James H. Cone: Father of Contemporary Black Theology*," *The Asbury Theological Journal*: Vol. 48: No. 2, p.71.
<https://place.asburyseminary.edu/asburyjournal/vol48/iss2/6/>.

19. Johannes Verkuyl, *Contemporary Missiology an Introduction* (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 1987), 182.

20. SparkNotes. Accessed January 27, 2019.
<https://www.sparknotes.com/philosophy/aquinas/section1/>.

interaction until the individual is ready to matriculate to the next level of leadership. The objective is to avoid making the individual feel as though they have been pushed out of the nest too soon and set up for failure. Sue Mallory, author of *The Equipping Church: Serving Together to Transform Lives* writes,

The church by definition is the greatest gathering of potential servants in the world, but she is also the most notorious vehicle for disappointing, discouraging and even destroying them. Only a small percentage of willing volunteers can succeed without specific training and clear direction – and the church seldom offers either.²¹

This is a critical point of discussion. An individual cannot assume the role to lead simply because they have completed a leadership development course. There must be content development, spiritual cultivation, ministerial training and motivation as a part of the program. There must also be a continuing performance assessment with the individual as they progress in preparing to plant a new work and possibly beyond.

John Maxwell, in his book *Developing the Leader Within You*, states, “The number one motivational principal in the world is: People do what people see. The speed of the leader determines the speed of the followers. And followers will never go any further than their leader.”²² The goal is to develop leaders that are both competent in their leadership skills and are motivate followers wanting to be effective; if not more effective than their mentor. The amount of mentoring that an individual receives should not be regulated by a set of ridged standards or constrained by time; rather, it should be a continuous process, where training and growth will ensure that the mentor and pastor are

21. Sue Mallory, *The Equipping Church: Serving Together to Transform Lives* (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervon, 2001), 37.

22. John C. Maxwell, *Leadership 101: What Every Leader needs to Know* (Nashville, TN: Thomas Nelson Publishers, 2002), 88.

afforded the opportunity to function at the best of their ability. The educational system fosters the skills of students helping to ensure effective leaders within society and the workforce while the mentor program stimulates the leadership developmental process.

A report in 2007 entitled *Developing leadership capacity in college students: Findings from a national study* by Dugan and Komives revealed that “when students held leadership positions, it taught them skills that produced better leadership outcomes.”²³ It is imperative that the generations of new leaders are active participants in leadership roles and are prepared to provide long-term productive service to the church; thereby allowing the mentor to foster developmental roles that will enhance the leadership skills of those willing to accept more responsibility as leaders. During the mentoring process, care, passion, and at times restraint must be communicated to the new pastor when they are thrust into the presence of influential citizens; so that that they do not become tempted to drink from the cup of the allurements of power. The voice of the mentor must speak from the heart of spiritual truth that impacts the soul of the next generation. The power of truth frees humanity from the fear of perceived powerful people who would use the power of their office to pass laws that work against the freedom, health and welfare, democracy, justice, equality and safety of our children, and children’s children.

The history of the black church started in the arms of resistance leaders, through the African Diaspora, along with spiritual education and growth, while facing white supremacy teachings that artificially showcased its discriminatory beliefs and actions in the name of Christianity. Bishop Richard Allen, David Walker, Sojourner Truth, Daniel

23. John P. Guban and Susan R. Komives, *Developing Leadership Capacity in College Students: Findings from a National Study: A Report from the Multi-Institutional Study of Leadership* (College Park, MD: National Clearinghouse for Leadership Programs, 2007), 16.

Alexander Payne, Harriet Tubman, Dr. Lisa Hess, Frederick Douglass, Coretta Scott King and Bishop Vashti McKenzie never thought about praising any leader who used power to suppress, divided, hurt or kill others.

The black universal church has never been blinded or muted to the issues of the community or the movements of world leaders whose non-liberating words and action which suppressed, incarcerated or killed those who held the line of freedom for the many. The church must pick up the pace in mentoring the new pastors and anchor them when they are confronted with the politics and policies that have caused many to be delayed in responding appropriately. Moreover, the church must become a resounding voice in addressing how law enforcement treat our brothers and sisters who are pulled over for driving while black, shot, killed, profiled and arrested; only because of the color of their skin or accent. It is easy for parts of white society to assume that the people of color face the same basic set of challenges they do. Theoretically, this is a naive truth, they are unaware of the psychological, physical harm and dangers people of color face daily, in addition to the long-term assaults that are inflicted.

There must be sound mentoring during these times of racial hostilities and economic imbalances. The church must navigate the path of the new pastors, who will at some point in time address those who call the police on a black child who was cutting the grass for a neighbor to earn extra money, or the student who fell asleep in the student common area at Yale and had to prove to police that she had the right to be at this institution of higher learning.

History reflects the necessity of mentoring African Americans, yet our counterparts choose to mentor others who look and act like them, making it difficult to find diverse mentors and positions for people of color.

The book of Romans provides the following guidance, “Don’t copy the behavior and customs of the world, but let God transform you and them into a new person by changing the customary thinking habits. Then you will learn to know God’s will for you, which is good and pleasing and perfect” (Rom. 12:2). Change is inevitable and constant. Too often a senior pastor will get comfortable in his/or her position of feeding their ministerial staff and congregations through only worship service, Bible Study and cannot see past how it is normally done and is not willing to embrace the concept of change, in addition to reaching beyond the walls of the church. This can be a dangerous situation for a new pastor. If left unchecked, this mentality will be passed on to the new work.

The challenges for pastors continue to increase as the complexities of societal and technological changes emerge; along with the increased need to be concerned not only with the individual member, but the community at large. The legacy of the pastor as a societal disciplinarian has decreased, while the responsibilities for conversion and nurturing increases. The twenty-first century pastor is expected to have a more personal relationship with the congregation in the attainment of spiritual contentment.

It is important to note that there must be a self-awareness of the skills and experience one possesses at every level of ministry and be cognizant not to undertake any ministry (such as relationship counselling, counselling for abuse or addictions) that is beyond his/or her competence or role for which they have not been appropriately trained or certified in; when in doubt seek wise counsel. An individual seeking specialized help

should be referred to a qualified counselor or agency, keeping in mind, the church cannot afford to embrace the complacency of a community or world that would metaphorically lynch those who are consider different or need specific care or support; and in the same breath provide them with artificial platitudes. Preparing the next wave of pastors is essential and critical and must be placed in the hands of competent mentors focused on eliminating the possibility of spiritual fragmentation of the missions pastor.

Spiritual fragmentation was discussed as early as 1903 by DuBois and 1909 by William James. DuBois' argues in *The Souls of Black Folk* (1903), “within social theory enhances our understanding of the phenomenological dimensions of racial oppression and of how oppressed groups build on members' differences, as well as on what they share, to construct a cosmopolitan and richly textured community.”²⁴ DuBois penned *Souls* at the start of the Great Migration and noted that geographical dispersion would create racial solidarity, provide an enhance loyalty of and to the community, and emancipate individuals in mainstream society while maintaining their black identity. DuBois' writings provide time-tested powerful implications for promoting racial justice.

Planting a church is similar to the Great Migration. It is about the personal contact, lessening the effects of spiritual fragmentation, and understanding that Christianity is about relationships with God and with spiritual others. The church must strive for relational health through the power of the Holy Spirit, and then reach outside to help others do the same. Personal contact with those not part of our church circles requires intentional and deliberate actions. The leadership of the church is embodied in

24. Judith R. Blau and Eric S. Brown, "Du Bois and Diasporic Identity: The Veil and the Unveiling Project." *Freshwater Biology*. December 17, 2002. Accessed August 06, 2018.

God and celebrates His generosity of giving and passing on the embodied gift by word or deed to those awaiting on a word of security from God. This is often presented in *Scripture and Its Interpretation* as written by Michael Gorman. Gorman argues, “it has been proposed that the Eden of the biblical tradition included mainland Africa to the Tigris-Euphrates valley (see the books by Copher and Felder) and that the location of the garden of Eden would have been understood to be totally or partially situated in what has come to be known as Africa.”²⁵ Russel Goodman and William James co-authored, *The Sick Soul*, stating “no matter how secure one may feel, the sick soul finds that unsuspectedly from the bottom of every fountain of pleasure, as the old poet said, something bitter rises up: a touch of nausea, a falling dead of the delight, a whiff of melancholy.”²⁶ Contrary to James statement, the Word of God unleashes a level of faith that does not just look at the Word of God from a distance and declare that it is true, it takes hold of the Word and embraces it causing a determination that will motivate the reader to extend a willingness to serve. Rick Warren, author of *The Purpose Driven Church: Growth without Compromising your Method and Mission*, demonstrates this in stating, “the secret of motivating people into serving over an extended period of time is to give them a sense of ownership.”²⁷ By giving an individual the opportunity to lead and serve, leadership proficiency can be cultivated, thereby motivating a long-term desire to serve; and serve to lead. It would be inaccurate to assume that every leader, regardless of

25. Michael J. Gorman, *Scripture and Its Interpretation*, 1-19.

26. Russell Goodman, "William James." *Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy*. October 20, 2017. Accessed August 06, 2018. <https://plato.stanford.edu/entries/james/>.

27. Rick Warren, *The Purpose Driven Church: Growth Without Compromising your Method and Mission* (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 1995), 387.

training and opportunity, will eventually matriculate into leadership roles carrying greater responsibility simply due to life's circumstances, however, a significant part of the leadership process is also to encourage the youth to have a willingness to lead.

In the business sector, many organizations have formal mentoring programs in which employees are assigned mentors. This method of leadership development aligns with the project's goals to support and mentor the inexperienced individual while increasing the potential of the individual's experience. In the *Principles of Organizational Behavior*, Stephen P. Robbins writes about the developmental roles of the mentor,

As a coach, mentors help to develop their protégé's skills. As counselors, mentors provide support and help bolster protégé's self-confidence. And as sponsors, mentors actively intervene on behalf of their protégé's, lobby to get their protégé's visible assignments, and politic to get their protégé's rewards such as promotions and salary increases.²⁸

Robbins describes three types of mentors: coach, counselor and sponsor. This three-tiered approach of looking at mentoring and leadership development must be considered as a useful tool when used in the church leadership development process. Coaching or mentoring is a necessary part of developing all age groups to become effective leaders and being able to assess and work with them to strategize a course of action for the continuation of growth. A mentor should hold the growth and development of their mentees as matters of the utmost importance primarily focusing and embracing that growth. Another aspect of Robbins writing leads the reader to understand that a mentor provides counseling, support and stimulate the confidence of the mentee. Those

28. Stephen P. Robbins, *Principles or Organizational Behavior* (Upper Saddle, NJ: Prentice Hall, 2003), 348.

individuals being mentored will need committed and consistent support as well as positive reinforcement to help them maintain confidence in their position as servant leader.

Greg Ogden, author of *Unfinished Business: Returning the Ministry to the People of God*, offers insight about servant leaders by stating, “Servant leaders shine the spotlight of recognition on those with whom they share leadership. Far from being concerned that they will be diminished if the focus is diverted from them, servant leaders’ glory in the accomplishments and growth of colleagues.”²⁹ Ogden’s thesis is a principal that can be universally seen among sports teams. While the players get various accolades for their abilities, they would be unable to succeed without a coach who is willing to train, lead and discipline them, ensuring the team is successful. The coach understands the players’ performance and capacity to work together as a team, which is a reflection of their personal leadership on and off the field. While phases of instructions progress in the areas of coaching and leadership, mentors must understand that the quality of leadership produced will often be a reflection of themselves. Matt Willmington, author of *Innovate Church*, explains the relationship of coaching and leadership as, “coaching, then, is a critical component of leadership. It moves the church from leading people into ministry, to leading and guiding God’s people in their ministry.”³⁰ It is universally understood that the church is predominantly a volunteer organization; therefore a pay increase incentive

29. Greg Ogden, *Unfinished Business: Returning the Ministry to the People of God* (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 2003), 226.

30. Matt Willmington, “Chapter 4.” *Innovate Church*, Jonathan Falwell Ed. (Nashville, TN: B&H Publishing Group, 2008), 53.

will not be a factor, ensuring the acknowledgement and reward of those that are mentored is an effective method when developing leaders.

Similarly, leaders also need to know that they are making a difference and deserve acknowledgement for their efforts in preparing the pastor for a different type of leadership role. It is paramount that missions pastors have the opportunity to be developed in the course of this process and that they are also being purposely acknowledged. The business sector serves as an excellent example and template for what ministerial success can look like when instituting an effective mentoring process for missions pastor.

Leadership development is essential for church growth, planting and ensuring that church positions remain filled with well-prepared leaders, and with programs that stimulate greater productivity and quality training. Despite the extra time or potential for failure, the attention paid in developing leaders is considered critical, although conventional philosophy professes that leaders are born and not mentored. Not being swayed by that thought process, life experiences and life-changing leadership initiatives share an acquired DNA that must be passed on through direct interaction to the missions pastor on how to lead with dignity, selflessness, and respect for the benefit of others.

Mentoring is about shaping, nurturing, empowering and growing; with the final result prayerfully being a sound foundation laid by the mentor built on a trusting relationship of integrity, and perpetual learning. Success can be measured in changed lives, strong character and eternal values rather than just material gains, temporal achievement, or status. Ultimately, the church unlike other institutions, is primarily concerned with building relationships with God and unifying the community.

Unity is a common denominator in the drive to make others better than they are, however, it must start at the very top of the church's leadership if the goals of the church are to ripple through the denomination, while simultaneously being careful not to conform to the patterns of the world. The book of Romans states, "Do not conform to the pattern of this world but be transformed by the renewing of your mind. Then you will be able to test and approve what God's will is—His good, pleasing and perfect will" (Rom. 12:2) Too often in the short-sightedness of growing a church and ushering a new pastor into a missions church, the focus is on the number of congregants, the size of the building and the bottom line rather than mentoring a relationship with and for the pastor.

A key attribute to becoming a mentor is knowing how to be patient and to put others first. The question that dwells within the heart of the mentor is how will my leadership help make the missions pastor become a selfless servant that God called them to be? "Do nothing from selfish ambition or conceit, but in humility regard others as better than yourselves. Let each of you look not to your own interests, but to the interests of others. Let the same mind be in you that was[a] in Christ Jesus" (Phi 2:3-5)

Fallen Heroes: The Bitter Fruit of Disappointment

One of the most fearful thoughts to overcome as a mission (or established) pastor is being labeled as a failed or lackluster worker for God which can be heartbreaking, graceless and a demeaning position to be in. Fortunately, the grace of God rearranges this paradigm. He levels the playing field in the book of 2 Corinthians reminding the reader that,

You will be enriched in every way for your great generosity, which will produce thanksgiving to God through us; for the rendering of this ministry not only supplies the needs of the saints but also overflows with many thanksgivings to God. Through the testing of this ministry you glorify God by your obedience to the confession of the gospel of Christ and by the generosity of your sharing with them and with all others, while they long for you and pray for you because of the surpassing grace of God that he has given you. Thanks be to God for his indescribable gift” (2 Cor. 9: 11-15).

Actress Susan Lucci who landed the role of the vicious and vindictive Erica Kane in the soap opera, *All My Children* in the 1960’s and 70’s, was nominated for an Emmy nineteen times before winning an Emmy until 1999. Christians tends to have more room for fallen television and political leaders than for church leaders when they slip from the pedestal that humanity has placed them upon; the church is not always forgiving.

The Apostle Paul writes as though there is not an equal or common playing field when it comes to Grace, the book of Romans states, “Having gifts that differ according to the Grace given to us, let us use them” (Rom. 12:6). A review of these elements of Grace shows that the spiritual playing field is never at stake, only the field position.

Everyone has a role to play in the work for God, but none of us are responsible for the spiritual fruitfulness of the seeds that are planted. Remembering the work for God always yields fruit in God’s way, growth and time, as reflected in the book of 1 Corinthians, “So neither he who plants nor he who waters is anything, but only God who gives the growth” (1 Cor. 3:7). Disappointment, doubt and discouragement (3-Ds) is always there; yet one must face the element of life in ministry in which a plan must be established (with the assistance of a mentor) before, during and after entering the season of the 3Ds. Edward Dobson, author of *Renewing Your Sense of Call. In Standing fast: Ministry in an unfriendly world. Mastering Ministry’s Pressure Points* writes:

Many pastors don't run aground in ministry because they lack legitimate calls. Rather it's because they haven't been adequately prepared to work with people or situations involving people. They may have been trained to handle the Greek and Hebrew text, but they are not equipped to deal with imperfect people in an imperfect world. Sometimes, opposition isn't a sign you don't belong in the ministry, it's simply part of the call to taking up your cross and following Christ."³¹

Whether the mission church is thriving or dying on the vine, the work is all divine and it is what God would have the church to do at a place, time and on His terms by showing that His power alone sustains the life of all churches. Any tampering on our part to change, expand or reduce the life of the mission church, or to substitute artificial leadership ideals and beliefs for God's authority runs the risk of invoking God's wrath as written in the book of Isaiah concerning His glory, anger and praise,

For my name's sake I defer my anger; for the sake of my praise I restrain it for you, that I may not cut you off. Behold, I have refined you, but not as silver; I have tried you in the furnace of affliction. For my own sake, for my own sake, I do it, for how should my name be profaned? My glory I will not give to another (Isa. 48:9–11).

Mission churches need the development and support of their mentor and church leaders in giving them the grace to succeed, fail, praying for them in the work they are undertaking and supporting them during the financial difficulties they will face in keeping the church afloat.

The demands and complexities placed on a missions pastor, the family, the physical and emotional consumption will become overwhelming at some point in time. The book of 2 John assists the mentor and pastor in navigating the difficult waters of planting a church and reminds the body of Christ to support the fellow workers:

31. Edward Dobson, Wayne Gordon and Louis McBurney, *Renewing Your Sense of Call. In Standing fast: Ministry in an unfriendly world. Mastering Ministry's Pressure Points* (Sisters, OR: Multnomah book, 1994), 144.

Who testified to your love before the church? You will do well to send them on their journey in a manner worthy of God. For they have gone out for the sake of the name, accepting nothing from the Gentiles. Therefore, we ought to support people like these, that we may be fellow workers for the truth (2 Jn 6-8).

Without a sound mentoring process, missions pastors run the risk of becoming ineffective, burned-out, organizationally dysfunctional and lack the ability to grow leaders and followers within the church. Missions pastors should not be viewed as managerial islands, mentoring is a key element in their ministerial development; while learning from those who have faced similar challenges and successfully overcoming the demands, will be priceless. Many of the ministerial lessons pastors encounter require more than a seminary degree and emotional intelligence; it also requires the ability to be transformational, a motivator and the ability to inspire people through more than the Sunday morning worship service and also seek the plans that God has as written in the book of Jeremiah,

For I know the plans I have for you, declares the Lord, plans to prosper you and not to harm you, plans to give you hope and a future. Then you will call on me and come and pray to me, and I will listen to you. You will seek me and find me when you seek me with all your heart (Jer 29:11-13).

Transformational leaders tend to be nonconformists and more importantly leadership multipliers. The identifiable pattern with such leaders is the capability of identifying, nurturing and developing future leaders who will do the same with those that they lead.

Conclusion

There is an interconnectedness and interdependence between humanity and God's Grace that exemplifies the production of leadership with a mentoring relationship that

stimulates growth. Maintaining Jesus as the prime example, leaders must serve as a template for growth. The missions pastor is a spiritual servant who ministers to the congregation and community, supports the vision, and promotes the spiritual growth of fulfilling King's vision of a *Beloved Community*, while also needing the hand, heart and support of a mentor or team of mentors.

Just as Vesey and other historical leaders of the church were motivated by obtaining their freedom through the tenacity of nonconformity and divine leadership in destroying the institution of physical and psychological slavery. Vesey became a symbol of leadership for the abolitionist movement while the militant politics of white slaveholders dragged the country through a civil war. History reminds us that he joined the Episcopal Church in 1816 where black church leaders routinely took advantage of every opportunity to develop leaders and pass the lessons onto the members of the church and community while promoting strength through unity.

In the areas of leadership development in the black church, God's presence is known, felt but not always understood, which establishes the cornerstone for leadership development models.

Slavery, social injustice and the duplicity of the law is still fresh in the minds, hearts and souls of the global society in the acts still portrayed today. Slavery was not a choice, but an international disgrace that cuts into the very fabric of a contested sin that is fought every day. Church leaders must be resilient and resolve themselves to lead their respective congregations with a servant heart and a nonconformist spirit.

As the church commits to sending workers to plant churches, the expectation of support must be serious, significant, deliberate and selfless. The goal should be to provide

the servant pastor with the appropriate tools so that the work lacks for nothing and God's love in the work is perfected in us.

CHAPTER FIVE

INTERDISCIPLINARY FOUNDATION

Introduction

Chapter four journeyed into Martin Luther King, Jr.'s writings on a *Beloved Community* in addition to the mentoring processes needed by pastors planting a new work, provisioning them with the essential elements of leadership and knowledge using Elijah and Elisha as an example in the book of Kings

The interdisciplinary developmental process will compare and examine the relationship of mentoring pastors in the African Methodist Episcopal Church (AMEC) for this project and the mentoring of persons associated with the voter-canvassing process. The process of using interdisciplinary research and knowledge-based integration gathered in the analysis of voter-canvassing tools, leadership and mentorship will serve as a litmus test in preparing a pastor appointed to a missions church. This will allow for the consideration of implementing the tools used in the voter canvassing process.

The book of Nehemiah describes his determination in rebuilding the walls of Jerusalem due to its state of ruins in which the people of Jerusalem felt defenseless and at risk of captivity or death. Solomon was said to have been determined to provide oversight in the construction of the Great Temple for God and a palace for himself.

Author Sanders, J. Oswald writes about the need for leaders who would prefer to listen than speak in his book entitled *Spiritual Leadership*. Sanders states, "the church is

painfully in need of leaders...I wait to hear a voice and no voice comes...I would rather listen than speak – but there is no clarion voice to listen to.”¹ Today’s church needs spiritual leaders to acquiesce to the clarion voice and be willing to be where God would have them; and ultimately lead His people. Pastors must wait until the vision is made clear and the purpose has manifested itself. Pastors must heed the call of God. The book of Acts defines life in ministry received from Jesus, “But I do not count my life of any value to myself, if only I may finish my course and the ministry that I received from the Lord Jesus, to testify to the good news of God’s grace” (Acts 20:24).

The interrelationship of guiding supporters in voter-canvassing and mentoring missions pastors acknowledges and embraces the positive results of effective mentoring. Notable scholars have reported extensively on the specific processes and methodologies of interdisciplinary and transdisciplinary (e.g. Klein 1990 1996 2003; Futures 2004; Wickson et al. 2006); although limited attention has been paid to the specific characteristics of the contents of inter- and transdisciplinary research. This project will partially dissect the methodology used in the voter canvassing mentoring processes and formulate the findings as it relates to planting mission churches. This project is not designed at this time to provide an in-depth analysis of existing definitions and/or discuss voting and its merits; it is however necessary to address the leadership attributes commonly associated with the interdisciplinary research of voter-canvassing in order to illustrate related content of the preparatory work required for planting a new work.

Before any pastor can be an effective leader when confronting today’s complex challenges, they must be equipped with interdisciplinary skills-sets that focus on issues

1. Sanders, J. Oswald, *Spiritual Leadership* (Chicago, IL: Moody Press, 1994), 18.

interrelated with process development, information management, collaboration, critical thinking, and technological applications as it intersects with their ministry. The pastor should be ready to incorporate new and old methodologies, forms of analysis, interpretation, synthesis, and evaluation that will allow them to build on the skills acquired, in addition to establish an educational curriculum.

Using interdisciplinary relationships, pastors will have the flexibility to use modern and creative applications to strengthen their ministry which will stimulate ideas and processes that go beyond the established training baselines of the church in hopes of providing spiritual inspiration. 2 Timothy provides guidance on the inspiration of Scripture and how it relates to teaching, “All Scripture is inspired by God and is[a] useful for teaching, for reproof, for correction, and for training in righteousness, so that everyone who belongs to God may be proficient, equipped for every good work” (2 Tim. 3:16-17).

Collectively, pastors are responsible for identifying and implementing programs beyond the four walls of the church to include community, state, national and international projects and programs in order to expand the presence of the church and the Word of God. This may also entail leading a mission trip to a foreign country where young adults may work at an orphanage or conduct summer Bible camps. There will always be a need to provide hands-on leadership support following a family crisis, celebratory events, and coordination of projects to help confront the needs of a community. Biblical thinking and teachings instruct the interiority of thought needed to build the foundation of creative ideas for future Christian leaders. The inclusion of Black Theology with the discovery of interdisciplinary implications of history, creativity,

assessment, collaboration, coherence, and legacy, will also touch on the studies of the arts, cultures, communication, ethics, philosophy, economics and politics of the secular world.

There must be a strategy in place to mentor the ministerial potential in planting mission churches. The interdisciplinary process is only one example that may allow for the bridging of the intentional gaps in mentoring for the planting process. 1 Peter references serving one another like good stewards, “Like good stewards of the manifold grace of God, serve one another with whatever gift each of you has received” (1 Pet 4:10). Mentoring is a talent that must be used in the church to benefit others through good stewardship so that the process may continue in and with the cycle of serving and giving in a selfless manner.

Interdisciplinary Foundation in Ministry Practice

John C. Polkinghorne sets the framework as an interdisciplinary theologian-scientist who stresses the unity of knowledge as a non-negotiable position for the believer.

The true university’s quest for interdisciplinary truth may be properly called Christian, not because of some imperialist attempt at takeover by the churches, but because those who seek the truth without reserve, whether they know it or not, are ultimately searching for the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ.²

2. Ream, Todd, Michael Beaty, and Larry Lyon. 2004. *Faith and Learning: Toward a typology of faculty views at religious research universities*. Christian Higher Education 3, no. 4 (2004): 349-72. doi:10.1080/15363750490507375.

This quest for truth in knowledge appears to always lead humanity back to the question: What is it that God would have us do for Him, and why? The alluring power of learning is universal and unequivocally adds to the richness of human endeavors and achievements. Ream further writes the basis of interpreting knowledge, “the indispensability of theology gives the basis for properly interpreting all knowledge accessible because of God’s transcendent unity of all knowledge. God is the sacred ground of all reality, the integrating factor that ties together the multi-dimensional richness of human experience”³ Academic endeavors are interconnected and dependent upon biblical theology which is rooted in the supernatural revelation of God’s wisdom, logic and intelligence and are passed onto humanity as gifts, which are unique to each and cannot be dismissed or duplicated by humanity as written in 1 Kings,

God gave Solomon very great wisdom, discernment, and breadth of understanding as vast as the sand on the seashore, so that Solomon’s wisdom surpassed the wisdom of all the people of the east, and all the wisdom of Egypt. He was wiser than anyone else, wiser than Ethan the Ezrahite, and Heman, Calcol, and Darda, children of Mahol; his fame spread throughout all the surrounding nations. He composed three thousand proverbs, and his songs numbered a thousand and five. He would speak of trees, from the cedar that is in the Lebanon to the hyssop that grows in the wall; he would speak of animals, and birds, and reptiles, and fish. People came from all the nations to hear the wisdom of Solomon; they came from all the kings of the earth who had heard of his wisdom (1 Kg 4:29-34).

These gifts must not be ignored or used in vain, but tempered with a heart of submission, humility and grace as written in the book of 1 Corinthians, “Now concerning food sacrificed to idols: we know that all of us possess knowledge. Knowledge puffs up, but love builds up” (1 Cor 8:1). As creative as humanity is, it will never know as much as God, nor will there be a comparable level of knowledge and love to His. He admonishes

3. Ream, 61-64.

His children to call upon him as written in the book of Jeremiah, because He has the answer. “Call to me and I will answer you and will tell you great and hidden things that you have not known” (Jer 33:3). It is imperative that as the hearer and doers of God’s divine authority, we use knowledge with discernment, wisdom and virtue:

For this very reason, you must make every effort to support your faith with goodness, and goodness with knowledge, and knowledge with self-control, and self-control with endurance, and endurance with godliness, and godliness with mutual affection, and mutual affection with love. For if these things are yours and are increasing among you, they keep you from being ineffective and unfruitful in the knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ. For anyone who lacks these things is short-sighted and blind and is forgetful of the cleansing of past sins (2 Pt 1:5-9).

Highlighting the events in Jesus’ life as well as the various translations, commentaries and employment of Scripture, there are at least three theological themes that are identified as central to Jesus in His teachings: (1) Jesus is presented as the one coming, in whom the kingdom of heaven is brought near to spread the Word of God; (2) Jesus was mentored by the Father in heaven; and (3) Jesus was a leader who embraced the responsibility of teaching all who would humble themselves and listen.

Jesus’ traditional teachings have been passed on from generation to generation, yet God’s children are still slow to learn for past transgressions. The book of Acts explains, “You stiff-necked people, uncircumcised in heart and ears, you are forever opposing the Holy Spirit, just as your ancestors used to do.” (Acts 7:51, NRSV). As with the children of Israel, the deoxyribonucleic acid (DNA) of disobedience was pass forward to the children of the children of Israel who are still slow learners and require a repetitive sequence of events to be receptively taught and learned in order for it to sink in. The problems and challenges of life keep recurring, right when the situation seems to be

resolved, the lessons of life provide a setback and the words, not again comes to mind!
But God, the ultimate mentor has the answer.

The Bible illustrates how God's teachings are quickly forgotten and how soon old patterns of behavior come back. Mentoring along with repetitive exposure and course corrections is always needed. Humanity did not develop its bad habits overnight, or in a matter of a few days, which makes it unrealistic to expect these habits to vaporize instantaneously. There is no mathematical formula, no YouTube video, or principle that can undo the damage of inappropriate leadership, followership and bad mentoring over the vast number of years. Change requires dedication and hard work in the removal of the old self and replacement with a new self that is in alignment with God's true righteousness and holiness as written in the book of Ephesians,

You were taught to put away your former way of life, your old self, corrupt and deluded by its lusts, and to be renewed in the spirit of your minds, and to clothe yourselves with the new self, created according to the likeness of God in true righteousness and holiness (Eph. 4:22-24).

Growth in ministry as a pastor is rewarding, uncomfortable and sometimes frightening. There can be no leadership without growth, no growth without change, no change without friction or loss, and no loss without pain and suffering. We fear change because of the loss of comfort and familiarity it provides. Mission pastors must be made aware early in the church planting process that good habits take time to develop and at times will result in having to dissolve old relationships to allow new ones to thrive.

The character of the pastor combined with the support and direction of the mentor and guidance of the Holy Spirit will aid in defining the Christ-like character which must be practiced, protected, developed and embraced over time. Developing good pastoral practices and habits are not instantaneous. There is a level of devotion that must be

applied by the practitioner; just as Paul urged Timothy to practice: “Put these things into practice, devote yourself to them, so that all may see your progress” (1 Tim. 4:15). The key is to emulate a Christ-like character which must be present in the walk and leadership of the mentor who will provide an intentional focus for the missions pastor’s work during the planting process and beyond. An impactful and dedicated mentoring process is desperately needed in the development of the missions pastor; as the mentor and pastor grow, both will gain a perspective of the prosperous gifts they have been blessed with according to the book of Joshua,

This book of the law shall not depart out of your mouth; you shall meditate on it day and night, so that you may be careful to act in accordance with all that is written in it. For then you shall make your way prosperous, and then you shall be successful (Jos 1:8).

In all aspects of life, it takes mentoring and leadership to ensure that individuals are not apathetic in fulfilling their role for God and the mission of the body of Christ with an intentional development of leaders and empowerment of the members of the church to function successfully with a long-term perspective. This perspective is similar to the style used by coach and author, Tony Dungy, in his writing of, *The Mentor Leader*. Dungy states,

Building an organization for success means creating a culture that will live on through succeeding generations. It means building with a long-term perspective—a perspective that says when God is involved in the process, life takes on eternal significance. The difficulty for most people is that maintaining a long-term perspective requires faith.⁴

The task of developing missions pastors to lead the church is a commitment to serve with a long-term, greater and selfless commitment of service unto God, which is the

4. Tony Dungy and Nathan Whitaker, *The Mentor Leader* (Carol Stream, IL: Tyndale House Publishers, 2011), 15.

foundation of all things needed in the development of the pastor, as well as the distribution of their gifts and abilities.

Jesus routinely established relationships and influenced His followers, leading by example. Ultimately, His disciples faithfully followed in His footsteps and generationally continue His works today, signifying the importance of not only continuity, but that of emulating Christ. Jesus is the model for mentoring and leadership development in the church which is illustrated in the book of Mark concerning His intentional influence on specific leaders to fulfill the Father's will. "And he appointed twelve, whom he also named apostles, to be with him, and to be sent out to proclaim the message" (Mk 3:14). There will be a point in time when the mentoring relationship and possibly the mission of the church will come to an end. Prayerfully, all parties will be placed in a good position to move on and still allow the relationship to continue. Even after Jesus departed from His disciples, He left them with clear instructions. Jesus came near and spoke to them as read from the book of Matthew,

I've received all authority in heaven and on earth. Therefore, go and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, teaching them to obey everything that I've commanded you. Look, I myself will be with you every day until the end of this present age (Matt 28:16-20).

As the mentor and missions pastor part ways, time must be allocated to revisit the original goals and objectives; and compare them with the outcomes allowing all involved in the process to review what progress had been made and to acknowledge what has or has not been achieved. It may be necessary to encourage the pastor to find another mentor for the next evolution of their ministry and most importantly what gifts God has placed in this relationship. The book of Proverbs speaks of the gift of knowledge, "Through God's

words there is an understanding that God is the one who gives the gift of knowledge and an awareness. For the Lord provides wisdom; from his mouth come knowledge and understanding” (Prov 2:6).

Pastoral transfers or ending the formal relationship does not mean the mentoring relationship has to end. It is not uncommon for teacher, students, and mentors to stay in touch informally and support each other as an opportunity for growth and networking. From the pastor’s perspective, it is an opportunity to review the areas of growth that have occurred during the relationship; as well as an opportunity to receive feedback on the challenges, and lessons learned over the course of time. Closure of the relationship is an important process in mentoring and is the final exchanged between the two-parties as the Lord watches over this parting as written in the book of Psalm,

I lift up my eyes to the hills—from where will my help come? My help comes from the Lord, who made heaven and earth. He will not let your foot be moved; he who keeps you will not slumber. He who keeps Israel will neither slumber nor sleep. The Lord is your keeper; the Lord is your shade at your right hand. The sun shall not strike you by day, nor the moon by night. The Lord will keep you from all evil; he will keep your life. The Lord will keep your going out and your coming in from this time on and forevermore (Ps 121).

Interdisciplinary Foundations: Mentoring and Voter Canvassing Process

A variety of groups, private companies, political organizations, and government entities use canvassing to gather statistical data, sell merchandise, solicit donations, or distribute information. A canvass is a conversation between two or more persons who combine customer service and listening skills with marketing knowledge to persuade individuals to buy a product, support a cause, or volunteer information. Canvassers

usually spend most of their time initiating contact with the public and often must walk through neighborhoods, school campuses, churches or shopping malls to connect with people in their target markets armed with a script of how to approach consumers, potential voters, address the media and conduct town hall meetings.

The script allows the canvasser to move directly into introducing themselves, candidate and the platform for which he or she is campaigning on, for example: My name is John, I'm a volunteer with the XYZ party here in town and the campaign is reaching out to voters in the neighborhood to talk about the upcoming election in November. We are interested in hearing what is on the minds of the constituents and what things are important to them.

Within the voting campaign process, there is a campaign or canvass director (mentor) who is responsible for getting the word out to the public and persuading the voters to vote. The canvass director is responsible for the day-to-day execution of the voting canvass program, ensuring that all employees are mentored and maintain accurate, up-to-date and reliable data for all relevant facets of the campaign. Each canvasser is under the leadership of the director. Although the position of a canvass director requires no formal, step-by-step education or career path to employment; passion, strong communication and social skills are important. It is incumbent upon the canvass director to have a process and tools to discuss the most effective ways for canvassers to communicate with voters. One such tool is the Campaign Skills Trainers Guide, Module 4, *Voter Contact Communicating Directly with Voters*, which identifies the three main groups and process implemented within each model. The three main groups are:

- a. Core supporters – these are the people who are going to vote for your party or candidate, and they will not change their minds before election-day.⁵
- b. Undecided or persuadable voters – these are the people who have not yet made up their minds who they are going to vote for or are thinking of voting for a different party than the one they supported in the last election.⁶
- c. Your opponent’s supporters – these are the people who are going to vote for an opponent and they are not going to change their minds before election-day.⁷

Comparing church planting to voter canvassing methodologies three main groups can also be defined by the mentor in planting a church with the implementation of a similar concept:

- a. Church-goers - those already attending a church but looking for something different.
- b. Undecided church-goers - people who have not yet made up their minds that they are going to church but know that they need to.
- c. Other church-goers - individuals who are going to another church or denomination and are not going to change churches or denominations. Campaign directors use the approach of “the Universal Principles of Voter Contact.”⁸

When training the staff on canvassing techniques in the community, the team and individual skillsets should include personable communication skills:

The more personal the technique or subject, the more persuasive, or hot, it tends to be, the more targeted a technique is, the bigger the return for the campaign and hot techniques are less expensive than cold techniques Worldwide, door-to-door canvassing is the technique that tends to have the highest impact and almost every electoral campaign will be made up of a combination of hot and cold techniques.⁹

5. “National Democratic Institute.” Hluu. Accessed September 26, 2018.
https://www.ndi.org/sites/default/files/Module%204_Voter%20Contact.pdf.

6. “National Democratic Institute.” Accessed September 26, 2018.

7. “National Democratic Institute.” Accessed September 26, 2018.

8. “National Democratic Institute.” Accessed September 26, 2018.

9. “National Democratic Institute.” Accessed September 26, 2018.

In the age of instantaneous communication social media (websites, Twitter, Facebook, and Instagram) is the preferred tool of choice for getting the word out to the community as it relates to current events, photos, partnerships and supporters who may participate in registration event. By far the most effective way to inform and garner a massive turnout of voters is with high-quality informative conversations that urge the community to vote.

In 1998, Alan Gerber (Dean of Social Science, Yale University), and Dr. Don Green (American Politics, Political Methodology, Columbia University) conducted a series of voting campaign field experiments. The professors randomly assigned voters to receive different notifications to vote by means of postcards, phone calls, some received a visit from a canvasser, and some received no information. The findings of the experiment determined that voters who were called or sent postcards were not necessarily more likely to vote than those that received no information. However, the canvassing experiment depicted a tremendous impact on a voter's temperament and likelihood to go to the polls; thereby increasing voter turnout in the November 1998 election, supporting the positive effects of face-to-face political mobilization. Authors Alan S. Gerber and Donald P. Green outline the positive effects of canvassing in their book entitled, *The Effects of Canvassing, Telephone Calls, and Direct Mail on Voter Turnout: A Field Experiment*. Gerber and Green argue,

We report the results of a randomized field experiment involving approximately 30,000 registered voters in New Haven, CT. Nonpartisan get-out-the-vote messages conveyed through personal canvassing, direct mail, and telephone calls shortly before the November 1998 election. A variety of substantive messages were used. Voter turnout was increased substantially by personal canvassing, slightly by direct mail, and not at all by telephone calls. These findings support

our hypothesis that the long-term retrenchment in voter turnout is partly attributable to the decline in face-to-face political mobilization.¹⁰

Gerber and Green's experiment proved that personal conversations have an increase effect on the outcome of an election. Effective canvassing operations emerge as consistent vote contenders and aid in overcoming communication barriers.

The Life of Public Servants

Senator Kamala (pronounced, comma-la, translation, lotus flower) Harris (former Attorney General of CA, 2011-2017) has spent her life passionately fighting injustice for those who have been incarcerated. She is a defender and the voice for those without a voice. In her book entitled, *The Truths We Hold, An American Journey*, she begins with her story as an intern at the Alameda County Superior Courthouse in Oakland, "I knew the kind of work I wanted to do and who I wanted to serve."¹¹ In reading this book, Senator Harris had an incarnation of being a defender and activist that was inspired by her mother, Shyamala, an Indian-American immigrant, activist, and breast cancer researcher.

The roots of her activism and community organizer were planted long before her DNA was established. Harris claims that her strength and desire to serve others is derived from her grandparents down through her mother, "My mother learned that it was service

10. Alan S. Gerber and Donald P. Green, "The Effects of Canvassing, Telephone Calls, and Direct Mail on Voter Turnout: A Field Experiment." *American Political Science Review* 94, no. 03 (2000): 653-63. doi:10.2307/2585837.

11. Kamala D. Harris, *The Truths We Hold: An American Journey* (New York, NY: Penguin Press, 2019), 4.

to others that gave life purpose and meaning. And from my mother, Maya and I learned the same.”¹² The early effects of mentoring by the women in Harris’ life would lay the foundation of the extraordinary woman she would become.

She recalls the story of making lemon bars for Ms. Shelton, a second mother and close friend of the family who ran an after-school program in the same complex where she lived. She writes about the encounter stating,

Mrs. Shelton took a big bite. It turned out I had used salt instead of sugar, her lips puckered from the taste she said, ‘that is delicious, maybe a little too much salt...but really delicious.’ I didn’t walk away thinking I was a failure, I walked away thinking I had done a great job. And just made a small mistake. It was moments like those that help me build a natural sense of confidence. I believed that I was capable of anything.”¹³

An extension of generational values was passed on through unwavering love, support, generosity and mentoring. But where was God in her upbringing and teachings? How was she biblically influenced? She explains, “My earliest memories of the Bible were of a loving God, a God who asked us to speak up for those who cannot speak for themselves and to defend the rights of those who cannot speak for themselves and to defend the rights of the poor and needy.”¹⁴ The essence of God proves to be ever present somewhere in the lives of leaders who have had solid and consistent mentoring, providing them with a moral compass and knowledge that words do matter. The book of Proverbs provides these instructions, “One who spares words is knowledgeable; one who is cool in spirit has understanding” (Prov 17:27).

12. Harris, *The Truths We Hold: An American Journey*, 7.

13. Harris, *The Truths We Hold: An American Journey*, 13.

14. Harris, *The Truths We Hold: An American Journey*, 16.

The eclectic written and spoken words of others to others can leave an indelible impact and create a lasting memory on an individual. It is important to choose your words wisely. Words can make or break a relationship and the choice of words and the way they are expressed can either accelerate, debilitate or kill a relationship. Being mindful and careful with our words is an ongoing exercise of selflessly serving God and His people and knowing that once a bad or poorly spoken word is said, it can be only forgiven, not forgotten. The book of Proverbs teaches us about the power of the tongue, "Death and life are in the power of the tongue, and those who love it will eat its fruits" (Prov. 18:21).

On January 21, 2019, (MLK's birthday), Senator Kamala Harris announced that she is running for president in 2020, articulating, "Justice. Decency. Equality. Freedom. Democracy. These aren't just words. They are the values we as Americans cherish. And they're all on the line now."¹⁵ In 1955, Martin Luther King, Jr., led the Montgomery bus boycott in Alabama to end segregation on city buses giving rise to the non-violent civil rights movement with the goal of securing equal rights for African Americans that other Americans already had by virtue of their skin color. King, his senior leaders and numerous followers, endured incarceration, death threats and exhaustive days and nights fighting for the passage of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, which could not have been accomplished without a strategic and tactical plan of his ground forces which included: canvassers, sit-ins, protesters and using the political process.

From 1945 until 1957, Congress considered and failed to pass a civil rights bill. Congress finally passed a limited Civil Rights Acts in 1957 and 1960, but they offered only moderate gains. As a result of the 1957 Act, the United States Commission on Civil Rights was formed to investigate, report on, and make

15. Maeve Reston, "Kamala Harris to Run for President in 2020." CNN. January 21, 2019. Accessed January 23, 2019. <https://www.cnn.com/2019/01/21/politics/kamala-harris-president-2020/index.html>.

recommendations to the President concerning civil rights issues. Rotating sit-ins, boycotts, freedom rides, the founding of organizations such as the Student Nonviolent Coordinating Committee (SNCC) and the Southern Christian Leadership Conference (SCLC), local demands for inclusion in the political process, all were in response to the increase in legislative activity through the 1950s and early 1960s.¹⁶

These actions did not prove to be effective in securing the right to vote for the African American, more had to be done. The media captured the daily brutality and violent clashes between peaceful protesters and authorities, the murders of civil rights leaders and workers such as Medgar Evers and William L. Moore; and the deaths of Addie Mae Collins, Cynthia Wesley, Carole Robertson and Carol Denise McNair, four young African American girls who were murdered in the bombing of Birmingham's 16th Street Baptist Church. The right to vote was still a dream that had yet to be fulfilled and the violence, the destruction of property, and the death toll continued to build as recorded by the U.S. National Park Service under the report entitled, *Civil Rights Act of 1964*.

The Civil Rights Act is born; A President is assassinated. In response to the report of the United States Commission on Civil Rights, President John F. Kennedy proposed, in a nationally televised address, a Civil Rights Act of 1963. A week after his speech, Kennedy submitted a bill to Congress addressing civil rights (H.R. 7152). He urged African American leaders to use caution when demonstrating since new violence might alarm potential supporters. Kennedy met with businessmen, religious leaders, labor officials, and other groups such as CORE and NAACP, while also maneuvering behind the scenes to build bipartisan support and negotiate compromises over controversial topic.¹⁷

On November 1963, Kennedy was assassinated. The Voting Rights Act already on life-support appeared to have died with him. Television coverage of the brutal event known

16. "Civil Rights Act of 1964 (U.S. National Park Service)." National Parks Service. Accessed October 02, 2018. <https://www.nps.gov/articles/civil-rights-act.htm>.

17. "Civil Rights Act of 1964 (U.S. National Park Service)." National Parks Service. Accessed October 02, 2018. <https://www.nps.gov/articles/civil-rights-act.htm>.

as “Bloody Sunday,”¹⁸ triggered national outrage. Student Nonviolent Coordinating Committee John Lewis stated: “I don’t see how President Johnson can send troops to Vietnam—I don’t see how he can send troops to the Congo—I don’t see how he can send troops to Africa and can’t send troops to Selma.”¹⁹ The nation waited for nine days before the House consider passing the Civil Rights bill as recorded by The Martin Luther King, Jr., Research and Education Institute on 21 Mar. 1965,

The House considered the Civil Rights bill for approximately 9 days in February 1964, working its way through more than 120 amendments offered by opponents prior to passage. On February 10, 1964, the House passed the bill 289 to 126 (Yea 67%, Nay 29%). “The House of Representatives debated H.R. 7152 for nine days, rejecting nearly 100 amendments designed to weaken the bill. It passed the House on February 10, 1964 after 70 days of public hearings, appearances by 275 witnesses, and 5,792 pages of published testimony.”²⁰

The tactical and strategic timing of events used by the Civil Rights leaders solidified the signing of the Voting Rights Act into law on July 2, 1964, by President Lyndon B. Johnson. The Act was engineered to address and overcome the legal barriers implemented at the state and local levels preventing African Americans from exercising their right to vote under the 15th Amendment to the U.S. Constitution and implemented measures to strip any and all authority imposed under Jim Crow which was later delivered in a speech to the American public stating,

18. “Remembering Selma’s “Bloody Sunday.” History.com. Accessed October 22, 2018. <https://www.history.com/news/selmas-bloody-sunday-50-years-ago>.

19. “Selma to Montgomery March.” Birmingham Campaign | The Martin Luther King, Jr., Research and Education Institute, 21 Mar. 1965, kinginstitute.stanford.edu/encyclopedia/Selma-Montgomery-march.

20. “The Civil Rights Act of 1964 and the Voting Rights Act of 1965.” Khan Academy. Accessed October 02, 2018. <https://www.khanacademy.org/humanities/us-history/postwarera/civil-rights-movement/a/the-civil-rights-act-of-1964-and-the-voting-rights-act-of-1965>.

A week after Bloody Sunday, on March 15, 1965, President Johnson delivered a nationwide address in which he declared that “all Americans must have the privileges of citizenship regardless of race.”²¹

It took a coalition of religious groups, labor unions, and civil rights organizations, led by those who in many cases paid the ultimate price so that this grassroots effort would pass the Senate and be extended by Congress under a special provision as referenced by Adam Liptak, editor of the New York Times, entitled, "*Supreme Court Invalidates Key Part of Voting Rights Act*."

On June 11, by a vote of 73 to 27. However, this right to vote must be extended by Congress under a special provision in Section four of the Constitution every twenty-five years and the authority of the Act continues to be eroded with each passing year. The Supreme Court on Tuesday effectively struck down the heart of the Voting Rights Act of 1965 by a 5-to-4 vote, freeing nine states, mostly in the South, to change their election laws without advance federal approval.²²

The Voting Rights Act of 1965 was last extended by President George W. Bush on 26 July 2006 and is slated for possibly another extension in 2031. Keep in mind that the Civil Rights Act of 1965 included provisions to specifically strengthen the voting rights of African Americans predominately in the South whose measures were weak and did not prevent states and election officials from practices that effectively continued to deny Southern African Americans their right to vote.

Activists in their attempts to expand voter registration were routinely met with the fierce opposition and hostility by Southern white segregationists, many of whom were entrenched in positions of political authority. However, the Act of 1965, slowly and

21. "Civil Rights Act of 1964. Accessed October 02, 2018.

22. Adam Liptak, "*Supreme Court Invalidates Key Part of Voting Rights Act*." The New York Times. June 25, 2013. Accessed October 02, 2018. <https://www.nytimes.com/2013/06/26/us/supreme-court-ruling.html>.

painfully changed the patterns and behavior of political power in the South. By the mid-1960s, Khan Academy in a report entitled, *The Civil Rights Act of 1964 and the Voting Rights Act of 1965*, reported that “over half a million Southern Blacks had registered to vote, and by 1968, almost four hundred black people had been elected to office.”²³

In the twenty-first century, the Voting Rights Act of 1965 continues to be skillfully eroded under the guise of change by the judicial system. Chief Justice John G. Roberts Jr. wrote for the majority: “Our country has changed, while any racial discrimination in voting is too much, Congress must ensure that the legislation it passes to remedy that problem which speaks to current conditions.”²⁴ Calculated changes in the voting process that had been protected by law especially in the South, concerning the parameters on early voting, will now be subject to a further division along racial lines of litigation of the 2018 midterm elections and beyond. Grassroots movements such as the “Woke Vote”²⁵ campaign energized the grassroots organizers to get black voters, churches and communities to the polls and was one of the leading grassroots groups responsible for Democrat Doug Jones' historic 2017 win in Alabama. Vann R. Newkirk, II, writes, *"How Grassroots Organizers Got Black Voters to the Polls in Alabama,*

The Woke Vote centered its efforts on potential sites of latent black political power, including historically black colleges and universities and black churches. Thompson bet that her tiny group of organizers could use those institutions as force-multipliers, turning each potential new voter into an organizer. By installing

23. "The Civil Rights Act of 1964 and the Voting Rights Act of 1965." Khan Academy. Accessed October 03, 2018. <https://www.khanacademy.org/humanities/us-history/postwarera/civil-rights-movement/a/the-civil-rights-act-of-1964-and-the-voting-rights-act-of-1965>.

24. Liptak, "Supreme Court Invalidates Key Part of Voting Rights Act." Accessed October 03, 2018.

25. Mashable. "Where to Mobilize If You Want to See Trump Crumble in 2018." Mashable. July 05, 2018. Accessed October 12, 2018. <https://mashable.com/article/voter-activation-groups-elections/#hwwjnH6ifkq3>.

student organizers in places like Alabama A&M University, Alabama State University, and Tuskegee University and the string of influential churches in black communities, Woke Vote secured pledges from members not only to vote, but to bring people with them to the polls.²⁶

The Woke Vote campaign drew from the lessons of yesterday's successes and failures in reviving the Black Power Movement of the 1960's and 70's. The movement instilled a sense of racial pride and self-esteem in blacks who were in a position of realization and an empowered strategic position to improve their lives through reforming the political, social, and racial reformation of African American life.

The Woke Vote campaign in 2018 (like the Black Power Movement) was not fixated on one candidate (not reelecting Roy Moore), or one issue, but on empowerment of the black voters and send a message on how politics in Alabama must change. In addition, the Woke Vote campaign considers its position as one the strongholds of the Republican Party and a difficult location for African Americans to register, find polling locations and above all, exercise their right to vote.

No matter how many people are canvassed and commit to vote, if voters are unable to register or vote due to redistricting, faulty equipment, closed registration or polling locations, or have been disqualified due to felony convictions or highly restrictive voter identification laws that force disenfranchisement within the voting process, the desire to vote diminishes. In 2017, Alabama adopted a questionable and highly publicized

26. Vann R. Newkirk, II, "*How Grassroots Organizers Got Black Voters to the Polls in Alabama.*" The Atlantic. December 20, 2017. Accessed October 03, 2018. <https://www.theatlantic.com/politics/archive/2017/12/sparking-an-electoral-revival-in-alabama/548504/>.

procedure moving approximately “340,000”²⁷ voters to its inactive-voter list; although, voters are (by law) able to re-identify themselves and cast ordinary ballots.

The Legal Defense Fund (LDF) determined that African American voters were denied the chance to vote or were instructed to cast provisional ballots. Ms. Lateshia Beachumemail, Center for Public Integrity reported that some black precincts in Alabama reported long lines and faulty voting equipment in an article entitled, *"A Super PAC Has Raised Millions to Mobilize Black Voters. Does It Matter That Its Funders Are White?"* Beachumemail writes,

Alabama’s black activists prepared for such contingencies. The New York-based BlackPAC (a Liberal Super PAC) mobilized a group of lawyers who bounced around precincts and local courts on election-day. Additionally, grassroots organizers focused heavily on making sure black voters could meet voter-ID constraints and launched campaigns to help ensure access to proper IDs months ahead of the election.²⁸

Campaign managers were cognizant of the statistical data that traditional canvassing (although effective) required a revitalized approach to canvassing the black vote across the South and throughout the United States. New approaches in reaching voters include attracting the millennial voter through, Rock the Vote Campaign, Black Youth Vote, Woke Vote, and Get out to Vote, to name a few strategies reported by Beachumemail.

In 2017, BlackPAC knocked on more than 520,000 doors, sent mail to 271,000 homes and made 72,000 phone calls to Alabamians. The effort helped organize black volunteers which in-turn urged prospective voters to the polls. In the end, the candidate BlackPAC backed, Democrat Doug Jones, notched one of the most notable electoral victories in modern congressional history, defeating Republican

27. Maggie Astor, *"Seven Ways Alabama Has Made It Harder to Vote."* The New York Times. June 23, 2018. Accessed October 22, 2018. <https://www.nytimes.com/2018/06/23/us/politics/voting-rights-alabama.html>.

28. Lateshia Beachumemail, *"A Super PAC Has Raised Millions to Mobilize Black Voters. Does It Matter That Its Funders Are White?"* Center for Public Integrity. May 16, 2018. Accessed October 03, 2018. <https://www.publicintegrity.org/2018/03/12/21558/super-pac-has-raised-millions-mobilize-black-voters-does-it-matter-its-funders-are>.

Roy Moore in a state that hadn't elected a Democrat to the U.S. Senate since 1992. BlackPAC spent nearly \$614,000 on canvassing and calls in a matter of weeks, ranking it among the biggest super PAC rainmakers in a race that attracted more than \$19 million in non-candidate spending overall, including the primaries.²⁹

America is now deep into the divided, expensive and polarized 2016 presidential election and the looming questions are: will the blue wave make a difference during the 2018 midterm election (yes it did) and the canvassers effectively targeted everyone across party-lines. Statistically, registered millennial voters now outnumber the baby boomers, more so than the younger generation mobilized to get out and make a change.

Millennials and the X-Gen are no longer kids; and the women voters and leaders have proven to be a tremendous force on the world stage. Registration irregularities continue to be reconciled by federal courts. Recently, a federal court blocked Georgia from throwing out numerous 2018 midterm absentee ballots and applications because of subjective signature mismatches. This occurred thirteen-days before the Georgia midterm elections and was to be on track for a high number of absentee ballots beings submitted. There was still an opportunity of making a change by voting as reported by Dylan Matthews author of, *"A Massive New Study Reviews the Evidence on Whether Campaigning Works. The Answer's Bleak."* Matthews writes,

Research has shown that there is a window of opportunity when canvassing strategies are most effective and persuasive. UC Berkeley political scientist Joshua Kalla and Stanford professor David Brockman, found that, "if the campaign action (canvass, phone call, etc.) happens within two months of election-day, the average effect on voter preferences was effectively zero. By contrast, when the campaign action happens well before election-day, and the effects are measured quickly thereafter, there's a real impact on opinions — but it disappears before election-day. The sooner you get to the election, the more

29. Beachumemail, "A Super PAC Has Raised Millions to Mobilize Black Voters. Does It Matter That Its Funders Are White?" Accessed October 03, 2018.

voters get set in their ways and choose candidates by their partisan alignment and aren't persuadable by additional campaigning.³⁰

Another low-tech tool applied in canvassing is the use of fliers, door hangers and posters to get the message of the campaign out to the community. The information is placed in high-traffic areas such as coffee shop peg boards or billboards; however, it is necessary to reiterate that canvassing is not about flier and billboard placement only; but variations in effective personal messaging.

In the Spring of 2000, Waste and Resources Action Programme (WRAP), worked with communities to achieve a circular economy in reducing waste and the use of resources efficiently by creating a sustainable waste management program. WRAP developed a door-to-door canvassing program working with business and communities in the reduction of waste, the creation of sustainable products and use resources efficiently through the use of WRAP's canvassing guide. The guide states:

This guide is designed for councils who are planning to organize and carry out a door-to-door canvassing project. It will also be of value if you are contracting another organization to run a project for you, as it is still important to have an understanding of the whole process. This will ensure you get the results you want and value for money.³¹

Personal contact through the canvassing process has significant effects on voter behavior and political advisors would be hard-pressed to explain the dynamics of this form of political activity due to the many underlining nuances of voter canvassing; however, the underlying formula is that direct contact pays tremendous dividends in the voter

30. Dylan Matthews, "A Massive New Study Reviews the Evidence on Whether Campaigning Works. The Answer's Bleak." Vox. September 28, 2017. Accessed October 03, 2018. <https://www.vox.com/policy-and-politics/2017/9/28/16367580/campaigning-doesnt-work-general-election-study-kalla-broockman>.

31. "Resources for Local Authority Communications." *Sustainable Clothing Action Plan (SCAP)* | WRAP UK. April 19, 2013. Accessed October 03, 2018. <http://www.wrap.org.uk/content/resources-local-authority-communications>.

canvassing process and the social interaction itself seems to matter. These interactions appear to influence citizen disengagement from the polity, specifically low-income citizens of color, into informed and potentially engaged voters when canvassing interaction occurs.

Canvassers and campaign managers work within the confines of the Constitution and State election laws among other policies and acts ensuring that there is unilateral compliance that allow citizens to register to vote without hindrance in getting to the polls on Election Day. Campaign strategies in 2016 to 2019 have shifted the public's paradigms from a once perceived meaningless and low turnout midterm election to a more personal call to action when engaged with canvassing, fliers, billboards and phone calls consistently employed across the life of the campaign; and in some cases after the campaign has ended. The key to running an effective campaign and planting a new church is with precise coordination and direct communication; in addition to a variety of substantive messages to the community.

In preparation for the 2018 midterm elections, voter turnout was predicted and did increase substantially by personal canvassing and slightly by direct mail. The results of telephone calls were not available during the time of the submission of this project. These findings may support the hypothesis that the long-term entrenchment in voter turnout is attributable to face-to-face mobilization, which can be employed in the planting of a church. The result is the same-- maximize door-to-door efforts through repetition using the following tools:

- Prepare a Contact List. Decide on where the targeting area will be.
- Train (mentor) the team, and prepare walk packets for them, including walk lists, lapel stickers, maps of the area they will be walking in, etc.

- Conduct a mock canvassing training.
- Discuss outcome of training
- Pre-Mail. Send out a postcard to the homes that have been or will be visited.

Ensure enough time has been allotted for visitation at the homes a few days before the planned walk. The postcard should have information about the church and canvassers should utilize the following script:

Hi, my name is _____, and I am the pastor, steward, deacon of the new church recently planted in the community. I wanted to let you know that I will be in your neighborhood this week to meet with and hear about church needs and concerns. I hope you'll have a few moments to talk with me about what this church brings to the community.

- Conduct second mock canvassing training.
- Discuss outcome of training
- Send the team out into the streets to meet the community.

Keep accurate notes, and make sure they leave behind a brochure or other piece of literature at each house they visit. If someone is not home, leave them some literature with a hand-written note with the following: I'm sorry I missed you! Please call the church office if you'd like to talk more about our campaign.

- Follow-Up Mailing: Send nice meeting you postcards to each home visited.
- For houses where people weren't home, send sorry we missed you postcards.
- Also, send any additional information requested about the church immediately.

Concentrated and direct communication are essential to getting the word out about the church; similarly accomplished during voter campaign registration. The most important concept of church canvassing is to keep putting the church's name and message in front of the community which will gain additional name recognition and

awareness for the church. The relationship between church and voter canvassing is particularly effective in establishing personal and direct contact with the community, which is the driving force of inspiring people to take note of what is happening in their community and the position of those leaders involved in being a change agent. Hear the words of Jesus from the book of Matthew, “Then he said to his disciples, the harvest is plentiful, but the laborers are few; therefore, ask the Lord of the harvest to send out laborers into his harvest” (Matt 9:37-38). The church leadership must take the time to invest and support those pastors determined to labor in becoming an effective missions pastor

CHAPTER SIX

PROJECT ANALYSIS

Introduction

Chapter five provided a conceptualized mentoring process for missions pastors by analyzing codified processes, used in voter canvassing, which could serve as a tool in the areas of administration, political affluence/influence, finance, marketing and other functionalities that could also assist in addressing pastoral growth, congregational and community needs.

The objective of this project in the analysis phase continues to explore the implementation processes for mentoring new pastors while examining the vital elements needed in a successful church plant process. Based upon interviews, surveys and analysis of collected data, the preliminary assumption appears to have been proved with a reasonable degree of certainty that mentoring is the cornerstone needed in the ministerial development of pastors appointed to missions churches and possibly established churches. *The Incarnation of Planting A Church: Changing the Paradigm* seeks to address the gaps in establishing a mentoring program for newly appointed missions pastors. This project has the potential to be a comprehensive development program across the African Methodist Episcopal Church (AMEC), national and international denominations.

Methodology

While evaluating the information obtained from the focus groups and surveys, significant data was collected through interviews and questionnaires completed by the respondents at times without any person present to give assistance. This might lead to a misunderstanding or 'no' answer to the question. To minimize these possible problems, I attempted to pre-test the questionnaires and interviews with several senior leaders and made the necessary corrections before sending 125 surveys to various subjects. During the data gathering period, no one identified themselves as needing support in completing the surveys. I find no reason to believe that there is any significant weakness in the data collection methodology that may have influenced the quality of the answers.

I later conducted a roundtable discussion which lasted approximately two-hours with a group of pastors concerning the relevance of mentoring. The outcome of the discussion resulted in the agreement that the nexus of mentoring provides individuals the reassurance that there is someone other than themselves who will challenge them to succeed and has their best interest at heart; assures them they are not alone in dealing with day-to-day challenges of ministry while planting a church; and makes them feel important in this process. Further discussions concluded that quality mentoring relationships can have a powerful effect in a multitude of ways to include personal, ministerial, academic, and professional situations. Mentoring connects an individual to personal growth, development, and has the potential to improve social and economic opportunities. Unfortunately, many newly appointed missions pastors will not have this critical asset afforded to them and will in many cases continue to struggle through the process of planting a church.

Project Implementation

Three elements were evaluated in the surveys, interviews and group discussions which included: mentoring, seminary (education) and the AMEC Board of Examiners. It was critically determined that mentoring was the most critical element needed in the preparation of a missions pastor's success in planting a church. Each of the participants in the survey also based their leadership abilities on being blessed with spiritual gifts and personal maturity, which they believed assisted them in resolving conflicts. Each envisioned a greater internal and external growth in their churches, conversely, leaders who did not have a mentor and were just beginning the evolution of becoming aware of these personal qualities admitted that requirements for a mentor in addressing these same growth needs was paramount.

During the group discussions, it became apparent that leaders with assigned mentors with theological seminary or university education showed an elevated degree of internal and external growth and drive; as compared to those individuals without the benefit of one or all of these valuable tools. These findings show that mentoring, diverse education, maturity, awareness of the divine calling and spiritual gifting are essential elements for a leader who are desirous of church planting. The continual planting of new congregations is the single most crucial business strategy for the growth of the church and the body of Christ. The Great Commission, (Matt.28: 18-20) is more than a rally call to make disciples, but to also baptize. Throughout the *Bible*, the reference is clear that baptism means the incorporation of oneself into a community with accountability through worship.

The participants who were interviewed and provided a completed survey, categorized a successful church plant as a church that carries out the Great Commission

(spread His teachings to all the nations of the world) through reaching the lost with the gospel and providing guidance to the members of the church. In order to measure the mentoring factor, the survey focused on the following questions: (a) Is there a need for a mentor? (b) Is the missions pastor prepared for the position? (c) Is there a continuous evaluation process to assist the pastor with the aid of a mentor?

The composition of the survey groups consisted of individuals from a variety of denominations; each responding to a pre-defined questionnaire covering three areas of interest: training, structure and function. The survey results were hand analyzed, with a margin of error of three to five percent. The survey also tried to capture the individual's personality type and the level of success they had as a leader within the church. The underlying hypothesis of this project was to present a process that in codifying a well-structured mentoring program as the most important factor for success of a missions pastor and for the growth and well-being of the church. The subjects interviewed were passionate and not short on advice for the practice and implementation of a well-defined mentoring program, in many cases stemming from their own successes, mistakes and failures. Each provided counsel that was categorized into six distinct sections. (a) Preparation, (b) studying leadership buy-in, (c) assembling the right team, (d) moving slowly with large purchases, (e) involve the family in the process and (f) associate yourself with one or more mentors.

The surveys and interviews concluded that there is a need for a mentoring program that assists in the career development of pastors whose desire to plant a church would be highly beneficial to the church body by providing the pastors with successful mentors who have shepherd one or more churches.

This project is just one example of the many ways to assist pastors in their first three to five years of ministry; in addition to helping them become better equipped in ministry and their pastoral assignment with valuable insight and fundamental knowledge that may have been lacking in the post-seminary education and training. In addition, a mentoring program with continuous observation and feedback would further support the success of programs that offer insight into mentoring requirements across all denominations under the title of *Training and Mentoring* with the principle understanding that as the program develops,

- Training is an on-going event
- Ongoing training should be at all levels to include, mid-level, third, fourth generation leaders and mentors
- Investing in the church plant to include, funding, time, training, mentoring, etc.
- Ensure that every leader understands

Survey Findings

In order to elicit a diverse and senior-level ministerial responses, open-ended subject interview questions were asked of Bishops, Presiding Elders, Armed Forces Chaplains and senior pastors across different denominations, whose responses were underpinned with actual data and anecdotal stories. These personal interviews were conducted with some of the most seasoned practitioners of church ministry and theology and are considered long-term and multifaceted practitioners in ministry who have been directly involved with church planting and mentoring at some point in their careers. The subjects were passionate in their responses associated with mentoring while not over-

spiritualizing the pastoral responsibilities. Each of the senior clergy members were asked the following questioning:

1. *How did you maintain (mental, physical, emotional, family, etc.,) balance in your ministry while simultaneously growing your church?*

Bishop Dr. Harry L. Seawright, Presiding Prelate of the Ninth Episcopal District

“In my first ten years, I was so ministry driven. I had low scores in school I was in a new marriage, then I had a wake-up call when my marriage was about to fail along with my health. I understood that God was inclusive in all that I did. After fifteen years in ministry, I re-evaluated my priorities in life and discovered what I needed to do. Commit myself to reading the yearly Bible. I have now celebrated thirty-seven years of marriage and thirty-five years of pastoring.”¹

Reverend Dr. Louis-Charles Harvey (former) Presiding Elder, Second Episcopal District

“I maintained my spiritual, mental and emotional balance by reserving time for daily Scriptural study and mediation, time for physical workouts – five to ten times per week and reserved time for individuality and family.”²

Reverend Dr. C. Anthony Hunt, Pastor, Epworth United Methodist Chapel, Baltimore, Maryland

“Intentionally and Prioritization. I have set my priorities as God, family, self-care and church. Being intentional in giving time and attention to these priorities, in this order, have helped me to maintain a healthy balance over thirty-one years in ministry. I have also developed the discipline of saying no to non-essential things that may enter my life.”³

Reverend William H. Lamar, IV, Pastor, Metropolitan African Methodist Episcopal Church, Washington, District of Columbia

“I maintained physical exercise, spiritual discipline and therapy.”⁴

Chaplin (Maj.) C. Chaney, USA

“I walk eight miles every day and I stay connected with close friends and family. I

1. Bishop Harry L. Seawright, phone interview by author, May 30, 2019.

2. Rev Dr. Louis-Charles Harvey, phone interview by author, May 21, 2019.

3. Rev Dr. C. Anthony Hunt, phone interview by author, June 13, 2019.

4. Rev William H. Lamar, IV, phone interview by author, July 5, 2019.

take counseling classes to assist my congregation as well as maintain my own sanity.”⁵

Reverend David Williams, Pastor, Abyssinian Christian Church - Fort Collins, CO

“I took it upon myself to start a church plant in my community when partnership and shared vision was all but nil. Your ambition, charisma and grit determination supposedly were your ticket to success. Often family, physical and emotional care was put on hold for the sake of staying focused on God and church work.”⁶

The primary theme for each of these individuals was self-care. Self-care is any intentional activity done in order to take care of and sustain one’s mental, emotional, and physical health. Each of these senior pastors were committed to self-care either through spiritual, physical, emotional care, time for family and the re-evaluation of their priorities in life. The key for everyone was to improved their mood and reduced anxiety however and whenever possible.

2. *What four areas of ministry would you have liked more help within your first seven years of pastoring?*

Bishop Dr. Harry L. Seawright

(a) “administration, although I majored in Business Administration and specialized in Accounting, I would have liked more help, (b) I wish I had been told more about self-care, (c) setting personal boundaries, (e) would have liked to have been a better student in doing my Biblical research.”⁷

Reverend Dr. Louis-Charles Harvey

(a) “I would have liked more assistance in the following areas: (b) stronger and dependable administrative support, (c) trustworthy collegial support, (d) continuing Education for biblical study, (e) more training in Pastoral counseling or advisement.”⁸

5. Chaplin (Maj.) C. Chaney, phone interview by author, June 4, 2019.

6. Rev David Williams, phone interview by author, June 11, 2019.

7. Seawright, phone interview by author, May 30, 2019.

8. Harvey, May 21, 2019.

Reverend Dr. C. Anthony Hunt, Pastor

(a) Time-management; (b) Goal setting, (c) Teambuilding; (d) Conflict resolution”⁹

Reverend William H. Lamar, IV

“I would have requested assistance in, (a) budgeting, (b) Planning agendas and Leading meetings, (c) Navigating denominational realities, and (d) Financial planning.”¹⁰

Chaplin (Maj.) C. Chaney, USA

(a) “Pastoring in a rural area, (b) Conflict Management, (c) Pastoring in ways that enable me maintain my authenticity at all times, and (d) Pastoring in ways that prevents burnout”¹¹

Rev David Williams, Pastor

(a) “Clergy tax laws, (b) Church Accounting, (c) Insurance, (d) Staffing”¹²

The discovery here is that each individual would have like to have had a mentor. Whether it was assistance in administration, conflict management, goal setting, etc.; they each needed help from an outside source, specifically a mentor, or a trusted advisor in assisting them in the early years of their ministry. What was clear in the responses was the need to exercise time management, avoid burnout and assistance in conflict resolution. It is important to note that these topics are either not taught or are lightly touched upon in seminary and BOE.

3. *What type of student where you and what led to the change in your spiritual life?*

Bishop Dr. Harry L. Seawright

“I struggled as a student, I did not take courses in Greek studies or language. My

9. Hunt, June 13, 2019.

10. Lamar, July 5, 2019.

11. Chaney, June 4, 2019.

12. Williams, June 11, 2019.

life changed after twenty-six years of reading the Word on a daily basis. I dedicated myself to reading a one-year Bible which helped me change my reading of the Bible today. I found that the Word began to manifest in me after I began reading the Word earnestly and I found that my faith level began to grow. I had to ask God, what is it you want me to do? You see God gives you time to refocus, recharge so that He can show you the way.”¹³

4. *Would you consider preaching to be a difficult task that requires faith?*

Bishop Dr. Harry L. Seawright

“Preaching is easy, you read a Scripture then preach it. Preachers are the most faithless people in the church. We do not believe like we tell others to do. In some cases, we believe that God is good but not for me. I would tell anyone that you have to embrace the Word of God which will remove your limitations.”

5. *How did you know that you were destined to become a bishop?*

Bishop Dr. Harry L. Seawright

“I had not planned on becoming a bishop, but during my quiet time of meditation God instructed me to do so. After the first attempt and I did not make it, He told me to try again, after the second attempt, He said try again and on the third attempt I was consecrated a Bishop in the AMEC. I had only been a bishop for only three months and had a heart attack in the airport; praise God for bringing me through a near-death experience.”¹⁴

6. *The one constant thing in the world is change. What would you tell a young preacher about change?*

Bishop Dr. Harry L. Seawright

“Embrace change, be a Gideon. Listen to God’s Word and voice. I ran for bishop because I kept the faith in God’s Word. Remember, David was more than just a musician; he had the heart of a warrior and he became king at the age of thirty and reigned over the land of Israel for more than forty years.”¹⁵

13. Seawright, phone interview by author, May 30, 2019.

14. Seawright, May 30, 2019.

15. Seawright, May 30, 2019.

7. *What lessons have you learned over your pastoral career that you would pass onto a missions pastor?*

Bishop Dr. Harry L. Seawright

(a) “Seek out as many mentors as possible and a place where you feel comfortable under a successful pastor. Additionally, in today’s fast-paced world, we don’t take the time to be with others. Technology is being used as a substitute rather than physical contact, (b) we need to get back to calling our members and visiting them, the personal touch, (c) attend Ministerial Alliance meetings, (d) interact with other leaders, (e) stay in touch with your mentor.”¹⁶

Reverend Dr. Louis-Charles Harvey

(a) “Seeking God’s Continuously before launching a new work and as the work develops and grows, (b) Develop a mentoring association with a group of pastors who have been in ministry ten years or more, (c) Develop a support with a group of pastors who have been successful in establishing missions work before you launch and consult with them regularly during the growth of the your new work.”¹⁷

Reverend Dr. C. Anthony Hunt

(a) “It’s important to work at developing a prayer life, people/relational skills and proclamation skills, (b) It’s important for all of us as ministers/pastors to identify a pastor, mentor coach, friend and therapist. Additionally, identify a great personal trainer and financial advisor. (c) It is important to have a support group of a diverse group of people to hold us accountable and pray for us.”¹⁸

Reverend William H. Lamar, IV

“Acquire a mentor and speak with them monthly.”¹⁹

Chaplin (Maj.) C. Chaney, USA

“Be your most magnanimous and authentic self at all times. Know your truth and your “why” Embody your truth. Know you “why” will change in time.”²⁰

16. Seawright, May 30, 2019.

17. Harvey, May 21, 2019.

18. Hunt, June 13, 2019.

19. Lamar, July 5, 2019.

20. Chaney, June 4, 2019.

Reverend David Williams

(a) “Start with a coach or mentor, (b) Do not do church plant alone.”²¹

The lessons that each of these dynamic senior leaders have learned over the course of their pastoral careers that they would pass onto to the next generation of missions pastors includes a similarity in their positions: (a) Start with a mentor, therapist and associate yourself with a group of pastors who have been in ministry ten-years or more; (b) Develop a support group of pastors who have been successful in establishing a new missions work before you launch and consult with them regularly during the growth of the your new work; (c) Do not do church plant alone; (d) Know your truth and your “why” embodies your truth. Your “why” will change in time; (e) It is important to work at developing a prayer life, people/relational skills and proclamation skills; (f) Identify a great personal trainer and financial advisor; (g) Seek God's leading authority continuously before launching a new work and as the work develops and grows; and (h) Set boundaries. Do not allow yourself to be overtaken by the work of ministry.

8. *What three individuals had the greatest impact on your ministry path?*

Bishop Dr. Harry L. Seawright

(a) “Dr. Joseph C. McKinney, former AME Treasurer Director, (b) Rev James H. Robinson, was an African-American clergyman and humanitarian, best known as the founder of Operation Crossroads Africa, (c) Rev Dr. G. L. Edmonds and (d) Rev Dessie Carter, former pastor of Turner Memorial AMEC, Washington, DC.”²²

Reverend Dr. Louis-Charles Harvey

“The Three Key Individuals in my life and Ministry are: (a) My mother and Father who were very active members and officers in MT. Zion AME Church, Memphis, Tenn.; (b) Bishop Vinton Anderson (Deceased) who encouraged me to consider

21. Williams, June 11, 2019.

22. Seawright, May 30, 2019.

pastoral ministry after serving in the academic area for two decades; and (c) My PhD. Doctoral Advisor, Dr. James H. Cone (deceased) who opened the new vista of Black Liberation Theology to American and world.”²³

Reverend Dr. C. Anthony Hunt

(a) “My parents, (b) Dr. Calvin Morris (my mentor), (c) Bishop Felton Edwin May (United Methodist Bishop)”²⁴

Reverend William H. Lamar, IV

(a) “Rev Dr. James Melvin Proctor, (b) Bishop A. J. Richardson and (c) Dr. Ronald Eugene Braxton.”²⁵

Chaplin (Maj.) C. Chaney, USA

“(a) My mom due to her unwavering support, (b) My best friends kept me grounded, (3) Dr. Berry, a counselor that gave me a free two-year scholarship in his counseling program. I was able to glean counseling techniques to offer my congregation. I also was able to apply those techniques on myself.”²⁶

Reverend David Williams

(a) “My father [clergy and pastor], (b) Lay men and women in the Methodist church, (c) Rev. Dr. William Augman.”²⁷

The senior clergy members were humbled to submit the names of an experienced or trusted adviser (mentor) that provided counsel to them during their ministerial careers. The importance of having a mentor cannot be overstated or under-represented in a ministerial career. Upon the completion of interviewing the senior leaders, a more in-depth line of questioning was presented to mid-level pastors and clergy member. In total, eighty-five

23. Harvey, May 21, 2019.

24. Hunt, June 13, 2019.

25. Lamar, July 5, 2019.

26. Chaney, June 4, 2019.

27. Williams, June 11, 2019.

(85) surveys consisting of fifteen (15) questions were distributed with only nineteen percent (19%) (sixteen (16) in total) of the surveys returned with striking similarities of the statements made by the senior leaders.

The evolution of survey questions represents a quantitative analysis of the answers, with a margin of error of three to five percent (3-5%) due to incomplete answers. The interview questions reflect the collective rankings from the participant's answers as follows:

1. Rank the following spiritual gifts/ministerial skills you have in numerical order, with one being the strongest: (example, #1; This has been affirmed as the strongest gift I have been given)

	Rated	Total Number Selected	Percentage
Counseling	First	Seven (7)	Fifty (50)
Preaching/Teaching	Second	Six (6)	Forty-three (43)
Conflict Resolution	Third	Three (3)	Twenty-one (21)
Vision Casting	Fourth	Four (4)	Twenty-eight (28)
Evangelism	Fourth (tied)	Four (4)	Twenty-eight (28)

The top three rated answers were as follows: 1) preaching/teaching, 2) Counseling, 3) Conflict resolution, 4) followed by evangelism and vision casting being tied for fourth place.

2. *Do you believe that leadership is based on: (Pick three)?*

	Rated	Total Number Selected	Percentage
Skill	First	Thirteen (13)	Ninety-three (93)
Authority	Second	Nine (9)	Sixty-four (64)
Position	Second (tied)	Nine (9)	Sixty-four (64)
Charisma	Third	Eight (8)	Fifty-seven (57)
Power	Fourth	Four (4)	Twenty-eight (28)

The top three selections for the basis of leadership were as follows: 1) Skills, 2) Authority and position was tied for second and 3) Charisma

3. *In your opinion, can leadership (mentoring) determine the quality of a follower?*

Yes - Rated as number one (thirteen selections (fifty-four percent (54%))), No - Rated as second (one selection)

4. *Was a mentor assigned to you?*

Yes - Rated as second (six selections (forty-two percent (42%))) No - Rated as first (nine selections (sixty-four percent (64%)))

5. *If no, do you think you would have benefited?*

Yes – Rated as second (eight selections (fifty-seven percent (57%))) No - Rated as second (zero percent (0%)), N/A – four (thirty-three percent (33%)).

6. *True or false:*

a. *Leadership determines the quality of followers*

Rated as first (true - fourteen selections (ninety-nine percent (99%))), one false (one percent (1%))

b. *Leadership determines the mentality of follower*

Rated as tied for second (true - ten selections (sixty-six percent (66%))), five false (thirty-three percent (33%))

c. *Leadership determines the commitment of followers*

Rated as tied for second (true -ten selections, (sixty-six percent (66%)), five false (thirty-three percent (33%))

d. Leadership determines the morality of followers

Rated as third (true - nine selections, sixty percent (60%)) six false (forty percent (40%))

7. *Were you assisted in establishing and maintaining healthy boundaries between ministry and family?*

Yes - Rated as second (six selections, (forty percent (40%))) No - Rated as second (nine selections (sixty Percent (60%))),

8. *Did you experience any failures?*

Yes - Rated as first (fourteen selections (ninety-three percent (93%))), No - Rated as second (one selection (seven percent (7%)))

9. *Did you have someone to guide you through your failures?*

Yes - Rated as first (ten selections (sixty-six percent (66%))), No - Rated as second (five selection (thirty-three percent (33%)))

10. *Have you experienced burnout and felt lost?*

Yes - Rated as first (thirteen selections (eighty-six percent (86%))), No - Rated as second (one selection (seven percent (7%)))

11. *Can a pastor with power, authority and influence still be blind?*

Yes - Rated as first (fourteen selections (ninety-three percent (93%))), No - Rated as second (one selection (seven percent (7%)))

12. *Is vision more important than leadership or leadership more important than a vision?*

	Rated	Total Number Selected	Percentage
Both	First	Eight (8)	Fifty-seven (57)
Leadership	Second	Five (5)	Thirty-six (36)
Vision	Third	One (1)	Seven (7)

13. *True or false*

	Rated	Total Number True/False Selected	Percentage
Belief in one's creative skills and resources benefits one's objectives	First	Thirteen/Two	Ninety-three/Thirteen
The key to leadership is attitude.	First (tied)	Thirteen/Two	Ninety-three/Thirteen
Confidence in one's ability to achieve objective is key in accomplishing goals	Second	Eleven/Three	Seven-eight/Twenty-one

14. *Which of the following would you state describes a great leader? Select three.*

	Rated	Total Number Selected	Percentage
Empowers others	First	Fifteen (15)	One Hundred (100)
Focuses on own conviction, purpose, passion, vision for the next Generation	Second	Fourteen (14)	Ninety-three (93)
Drive to lead with an advanced theological foundation	Third	Eleven (11)	Seven-three (73)
Leadership is based on their philosophy	Fourth	One (1)	Six (6)
Is a politically savvy and has a strong focus on programs.	Fifth	One (1)	Six (6)

15. *Select three of the greatest leaders in your lifetime?*

	Rated	Total Number Selected	Percentage
Rev Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr	First	Eleven (11)	Seventy-three (73)
Relatives	Second	Ten (10)	Sixty-six (66)
Teachers	Second (tied)	Ten (10)	Sixty-six (66)
The Obamas	Third	Six (6)	Forty (40)
Yourself	Fourth	Three (3)	Twenty (20)

Conclusion

In summation, this project explored the need for a strategy in planting a new-work and bridging what is perceived to be a gap mentoring and leadership development, (Chapter one). Moreover, this project examined the mentoring processes through the relationship of Elijah and Elisha in the book of Kings, (Chapter two). I addressed the position that, leaders possess identifiable characteristics that set them apart from their peers because they have been forged in a continuous developmental process shaped outside of their comfort zone and conforming frame of understanding, (Chapter three). In Chapter 4, I provided the reader with a refresher on Martin Luther King, Jr.'s *Beloved Community* and the mentoring processes needed by pastors planting a new work. An outline of the process and vision for mission pastors by codifying processes was presented in the areas of administration, political affluence/influence, finance, marketing and other functionalities, (Chapter five). Finally, there was a review of surveys and interviews of clergy leaders relating to the fundamentals that pastors will need in the first three to five years to

efficiently and effectively use after graduating from seminary, the AMEC and BOE, (Chapter six).

Based upon the data collected in the surveys, it is possible to draw the following conclusions: (a) that a structured and well-functioning mentor is an important factor when planting a church; (b) theoretically, leaders with outreach personality traits are usually more fitted as church planters than leaders who do not; but not always; (c) be willing to empower others; (d) have an attitude to lead, plant and diversify; (e) focus on own conviction, purpose, passion, vision for the next generation; (f) church plants are best assisted when they are birthed from an older mother congregation; (g) Training is an on-going event; (h) Mentoring should be at all levels, to all levels of ministry; (i) investing in church planting should include, funding, training and mentoring; (j) the mentoring process should be a continuously evaluated process involving all parties; (k) the church must refocus and restructure their committees on new works and give direct attention to mentoring at the inception of the planting process; (l) consider employing outside consultants on where and how to devise a plan on starting a new congregation; (m) train clergy in becoming effective church planters and mentors; and (n) work with community leaders and consultants from other denominations in planting worship centers in strategic locations through workshops.

Lastly, we must ask the question: How will the church of the twenty-first century go about being true to the commitment of the Great Commission? First, by meeting the people where they are and understanding their needs. This is how new churches and new congregations best reach new generations, new residents and the unchurched. I have found that the planting of a new church is an insightful way to revitalize many older church communities. Why? The surveys and independent interview results provide evidence that

mentors play an important part in changing the paradigms of the church dynamics by bringing in creative ideas and energy in an attempt to bring together the various members of the community with a church that has the freedom to be innovative and nonconforming with thinkers not held back based on old church traditions. New churches challenge other churches to conduct self-examination and the new church also becomes an evangelical conduit for the community.

The Bible and senior clergy members have influenced directed my thinking on church planting; specifically, the ministry of the Apostle Paul as recorded in the book of Acts, along with his directives in the epistles to Timothy and Titus. Both Timothy and Titus move me to action. The book of Paul's labor and literature demonstrate that he worked tirelessly to win lost souls out of Satan's kingdom and bring them into God's Kingdom (cf. Col 1:13). It was his aim to expend himself in this process with the knowledge that it was the Father's work in him (cf. 2 Cor 12:15, Col 1:29). The Apostle Paul's letters to Timothy and Titus reveal a mentor's counsel and directives to his protégés. These Biblical references, along with Luke's account in Acts, are the primary sources that motivate me to maximize my effectiveness in mentoring others. However, in these instructions and explanations, Paul does not formally detail a process for training up his men; and yet he commanded Titus to do it: "Set in order what remains and appoint elders in all the churches" (Titus 1:5-6). Although one may argue Paul's lifestyle demonstrated disciple making, I believe it was his teaching that determined his behavior. Let me highlight his practice.

In Acts 20, while concluding his second missionary journey and returning to Jerusalem, the apostle desired to encourage the elders of Ephesus, men whom he had

trained daily for three years. Paul expected not to see the men again and wanted to inspire them for the ministry and he arranged his return so that he could spend some mentoring time with them. What Paul shared with them on the island of Miletus has impacted me profoundly. “But I do not consider my life of any account as dear to myself, in order that I may finish my course, and the ministry which I received from the Lord Jesus, to testify solemnly of the gospel of the grace of God” (Acts 20:24). He explained that this process of proclaiming the gospel as “preaching the kingdom” (Acts 20:25). Then he tied up this package with this phrase, “For I did not shrink from declaring to you the whole purpose of God” (Acts 20:27). Preaching the kingdom, proclaiming the gospel, and declaring the whole purpose of God are used synonymously to describe the apostle’s mentoring process. Paul had a system.

Church planting is one of the lifelines needed to increase the number of believers in a city and one of the best ways to renew the body of Christ. The AMEC must refocus and restructure their committees on new works and give direct attention to mentoring at the inception of the church planting process; employ outside consultants using demographics on where and how to devise a plan on starting a new congregation; train clergy in becoming effective church planters and mentors; and work with community leaders and consultants from other denominations in planting worship centers in strategic locations through workshops. An accompanying focus must include strategies on how to fund these efforts and evaluate new church starts to include but not limited to:

- Restructuring the current committee for new church planting, mentoring and congregational development to include support for new church planting. The greatest challenge is funding and finding qualified church planting leadership and committed mentors.

- Employ a collaborative relationship with consultants and employ the use of the “mother” churches that have a clear sense of their local area. When we have members, who wish to form a church, they must consult with neighboring churches. Recommend sending planners to a church plant boot camp and build a team before launching.
- Consider hiring a church planter as an integral part of the staff. Clergy are currently put through professional discernment instruments to see if they have “church planting DNA.”
- Consider several intentional steps prior to church planting: (a) The formation of a Strategic Planning Committee, (b) Restructuring of the current committee on new works, (c) Instituting a Mission Group with a fund separate from the operating budget supporting the planting of new churches and new growth initiatives in existing congregations, (d) Equipping--leaders need to increase their capacity in order to sustain growth in numbers and in maturity.

These steps require mentors who will commit to investing in the process long enough and deep enough in order that consistent and wise decision-making can develop. This requires a long-term investment in lives, private and professional training.

When Jesus was confronted with the lostness and transformation of Jerusalem, He wept for the people and their city (Luke 19:41). But brokenness for the lost is not enough to bring about the needed transformation in our communities or the needed change in our churches. Jesus commands His followers in John 4 to open their eyes and see the harvest. Leaders learn more quickly when they are engaged by mentors who encourage emerging leaders to think outside of the four walls of the church.

The accumulation of data for this project can be a sustained source of information used in the preparation, development and mentoring of mission pastors which is key to the health and stability of the new church with an urgency of changing the paradigm today. Martin Luther King, Jr., was the front-runner in mentoring when he spoke the words,

We are now faced with the fact that tomorrow is today. We are confronted with the fierce urgency of now. In this unfolding conundrum of life and history, there is such a thing as being too late. This is no time for apathy or complacency. This is a time for vigorous and positive action.²⁸

The analysis of this project has concluded that there is a significant deficiency in mentoring missions pastors and a lack of specific leadership development for missions pastors beyond seminary and the AMEC BOE. The implementation of a structured mentor development program is the missing factor in preparing missions pastors for church planting. However, I am cognizant that not everyone who is groomed for pastoral leadership is always capable to lead or will immediately serve in the capacity of a missions pastor in the near future.

The implementation of a mentoring program with emphasis on the interdisciplinary studies and relationship between church and voter-canvassing are similar and are particularly effective through establishing personal contact that will inspire individuals to take note of what is happening in their community and developing those who are willing to be a change agent for the community. The tools of communication in voter and church canvassing are identical in methodology which include peer-to-peer texting, friend-to-friend contacts, phone calls, emails and social media which must be incorporated to create an informed community who possibly could be inclined to attend church.

Personal church outreach can stimulate the, disenfranchised and low-income minority citizens in seeing themselves through a different lens and on the same level as those who regularly go to church on Sunday morning. This in-turn, has the potential of

28. E. Cook, and S. Pesick. "Martin Luther King, Jr.'s *"Beyond Vietnam"*." OAH Magazine of History 19, no. 1 (2005): 41-50. doi:10.1093/maghis/19.1.41.

becoming habit forming, reinforcing self-identification as a churchgoer or voter long after the canvasser has departed, which could have a long-term effect on all forms of church participation. It is imperative that the missions pastor understands that the success of the church is not based on the number of members or even if it sustains itself, it is based on the work that God has placed before the pastor and the lives that have and will be touched.

It is not an admission of defeat, weakness or disobedience to acknowledge that congregations and churches have a finite life-span in which God prepares and empowers those He has prepared to do His work and keep watch, as related in the book of Acts, “Keep watch over yourselves and over all the flock, of which the Holy Spirit has made you overseers, to shepherd the church of God[a] that he obtained with the blood of his own Son.” (Acts 20:28, NRS

APPENDIX A

HUMAN SUBJECT CONSENT FORM

Dear Colleague,

Purpose of Study:

You are invited to participate in a research study conducted by a doctoral candidate from United Theological Seminary, Dayton, OH, concerning the implications, perceptions and attitudes (pros/cons) toward pastoral mentoring for missions and newly appointed clergy.

I hope and pray that you will be enlightened and moved by the Holy Spirit as you complete this survey.

Selection Process:

You were selected as a participant in this study because I value your input as I attempt to learn more about the pastoral and ministerial needs of those individuals appointed to either their first pastoral appointment or appointment to a new missions church.

Benefits and Participation:

You will not directly benefit from the participation in this study. If you feel uncomfortable in answering any of the questions, you may either contact me directly or feel free to skip the question. In addition, you may discontinue participation in the survey at any time without prejudice. If you decide to participate, please complete the enclosed survey. The return of this survey is your implied consent.

Payment/Compensation for Participation:

You will not be compensated for your participation in this research study.

Confidentiality:

Your anonymity is completely assured during this research, as no identifying information is recorded during this survey. Any information that is obtained in connection with this a study that could possibly be associated with you will remain confidential and will only be disclosed with your permission or as required by law.

Should you have any questions concerning this survey please contact me at: jcchandler1@united.edu, or by cell at: (240) 338-1154.

I thank you in advance for your assistance in this study.

Blessings

J. C. Chandler, Jr.
Rev J. C. Chandler, Jr.

APPENDIX B

SENIOR CLERGY SURVEY QUESTIONS

Senior Clergy Survey (Chaplains, Pastors, Elders, Bishops, etc.)

1. How did you maintain (mental, physical, emotional, family, etc.,) balance in your ministry while simultaneously growing your church?
2. What four areas of ministry would have liked more help with-in your first seven years of pastoring?
3. What lessons have learned over your pastoral career that you would pass onto a missions pastor?
4. What three individuals had the greatest impact on your ministry path?

APPENDIX C

PASTOR SURVEY QUESTIONS

This survey is tailored to obtain input on matters related to the mentoring and development of missions pastors, which in theory, can result in creating a shared value system and better development of mission pastors.

Interview Questions

1. Please rank the following spiritual gifts/ministerial skills you have in numerical order, with one being the strongest: (example, #1; This has been affirmed as the strongest gift I've been given)

- a. Preaching/Teaching____
- b. Vision casting____
- c. Evangelism____
- d. Counseling____
- e. Conflict resolution____

2. Do you believe that leadership is based on: (Pick three)

- a. Power____
- b. Authority____
- c. Position____
- d. Skill____
- e. Charisma____

3. In your opinion, can leadership (mentoring) determine the quality of a follower?
Yes____No____

4. Was a mentor assigned to you? Yes____No____

5. If no, do you think you would have benefited? Yes____No____

6. True or false:

- a. Leadership determines the quality of followers__ _
- b. Leadership determines the mentality of follower_ __

- c. Leadership determines the morality of followers____
 - d. Leadership determines the commitment of followers____
7. Were you assisted in establishing and maintaining healthy boundaries between ministry and family? Yes ____No ____
8. Did you experience any failures? Yes ____No____
9. Did you have someone to guide you through your failures?
10. Have you experienced burnout and felt lost? Yes____ No____
11. Can a pastor with power, authority and influence still be blind? Yes__No__
12. Is vision more important than leadership or leadership more important than
- a. Vision
 - b. Leadership____
 - c. Vision____
 - d. Both__
13. True or false:
- a. The key to leadership is attitude. ____
 - b. Belief in one's creative skills and resources benefits one's objectives. ____
 - c. Confidence in one's ability to achieve objective is key in accomplishing goals.____
14. Which of the following would you state describes a great leader: Select 3
- a. Drive to lead with an advanced theological foundation____
 - b. Leadership is based on their philosophy____
 - c. Empowers others____
 - d. Is a politically savvy and has a strong focus on programs____

- e. Focuses on own conviction, purpose, passion, vision for the next generation____

15. Select three of the greatest leaders in your lifetime and why?

- a. Yourself____
- b. Relatives____
- c. The. Obamas____
- d. Teacher____
- e. Rev Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.

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